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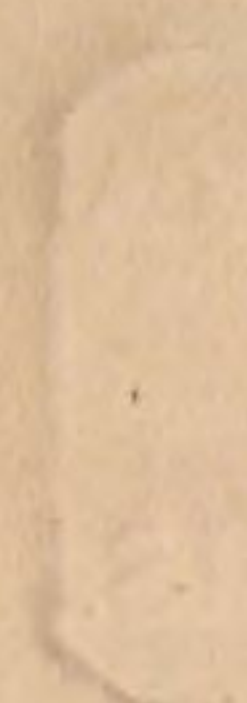
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A
PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY,

IN SEVERAL

Select Discourses

UPON THE

PRINCIPAL HEADS OF CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

PROTESTANTS AND PAPISTS:

BEING WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED

By the most eminent Divines of the Church of England,

CHIEFLY IN THE REIGN OF KING JAMES II.

COLLECTED BY

THE RIGHT REV. EDMUND GIBSON, D.D.

SUCCESSIVELY LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN AND LONDON,

[B. 1669, D. 1748.]

CAREFULLY REVISED AND EDITED

FOR THE BRITISH SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES
OF THE REFORMATION,

BY

THE REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

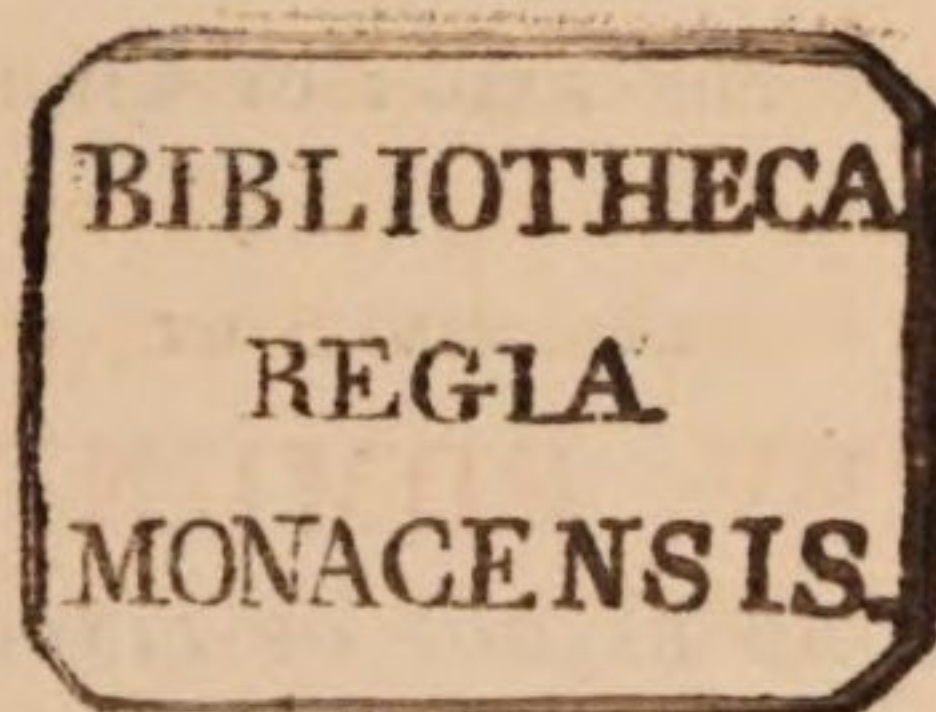
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THE PROTESTANT RULE OF FAITH,

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BOOK III.

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.

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THE PROTESTANT AND POPISH WAY

OF

INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE, IMPARTIALLY COMPARED,
IN ANSWER TO "PAX VOBIS," ETC.

TO THE READER.

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I WAS unwillingly engaged in the following dispute; but at last two or three sheets were put to the press, about a year ago: and then meeting with an unexpected interruption, it lay by so long, till the late great and happy Revolution seemed to make discourses of this nature less necessary than they were when this was first undertaken. It had therefore, perhaps, lain for ever unfinished, if I had not met with the Catalogue of Treatises published against Popery in the late reign; but finding it there named, I thought myself obliged to make good what had been promised for me, though without my knowledge. I have endeavoured to make it as short and plain as I could; and hope I have made it appear, that the Protestant way of interpreting Scripture will give us as much satisfaction as we need, but that the Papists, upon their own principles, can be certain of nothing.

WHEN I first got a sight of the Dialogues that have passed for some time, under the title of "PAX VOBIS," I little imagined that after it had lain so long neglected, as it deserves, so much stress should be now laid upon so slight and frivolous a paper.

It has been hitherto suffered to go up and down without an answer, not for any difficulty there was in it, but because no man could conceive that the world should ever be deluded by such a thin and manifest piece of sophistry. The arguing part is apparently fallacious, and the style so very light and vain, that it does but ill become the seriousness of the matter. Yet I hear these empty toyish Dialogues are esteemed by some absolutely unanswerable; and because he has not yet been thought worth the considering, the author of them passes with some of his party for such a mighty champion, that they begin to believe there is not a man to be found hardy enough to look him in the face. When, indeed, it is nothing but the weakness of his performance that has hitherto secured him from a reply; and nothing but the insolent brags of his pretended admirers can make one necessary, or so much as excusable now. But for fear the confidence of these men should prevail upon the easiness and credulity of others, I shall make some short reflection on the book itself; and then examine the fundamental principle upon which he proceeds; and if that be taken away, all the cavils that are built upon it will fall to the ground of themselves.

The book was sent abroad under the mock title of "PAX VOBIS, or GOSPEL and LIBERTY; against ancient and modern Papists. By E. G. Preacher of the Word." It consists of a Preface, and certain Dialogues. And here, if it were worth the while, I might take notice how he hampers himself in a plain contradiction at the very beginning; for in the second line of the preface, he bids "the children of the Reformation," to whom it is directed, "reach their hand to receive this treatise:" and the very first words of the treatise are, "I have read your preface."* So that in the learned preface it is implied, that the treatise was first writ; and in the very entrance of the treatise it is supposed, that the preface was not only written, but published and read too, before one word of that wise discourse had passed, which is so notably represented in the seven Dialogues, which make up that much admired and

* Page 1.

celebrated treatise. I cannot tell how things may be adjusted; to me the case seems exceeding intricate, and if a difference should chance to arise among the issue of this author's brain, about the rights of primogeniture, they would stand in need of a more infallible judge than himself to determine the controversy. But this is not the only instance wherein he has shewn himself a man of wonderful art, and therefore I shall make no farther remarks upon it.

The persons who are brought in speaking, through all the Dialogues, go under the names of Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac is represented like a bold dapper fleering fellow, by profession of the Reformed Church, in show a libertine, but in reality a downright Papist. Ishmael is set up for a kind of an honest simple Church of England man, that would fain defend himself if he could; but the other is so pert upon him, and assaults him so briskly at every turn, that the poor thing is utterly confounded; he knows not what to think, but gapes and stares as if he were in a perfect maze. Isaac is always clattering about his ears with "This and that is Scripture interpreted by such or such a man of sound judgment; therefore this and that, or what you please, is the doctrine of the Reformation." This is the sum of all he has to say; only he is continually trifling with it, and gives it you over and over again several times, in almost every page of the whole book. Which is enough to tire the most patient reader; and to a man of sense makes no pleasanter music than an idle boy, that lies drumming on the head of an empty barrel; he only loads your ears with the nauseous repetition of the same dull insignificant noise.

He all along affects a certain pleasantness of humour, as he imagines; but it is indeed no better than mere impertinent battology. His drollery is mean and vulgar, without any variety, so much as of the phrase; there is nothing in it either sharp or surprising, nothing that can be any way diverting, but only that Isaac is painted always grinning, as well becomes a person of his wit and character; which is the only decorum he has ever observed. It were an easy matter to expose the man; and if he had not done it sufficiently himself, make him appear as ridiculous as he has endeavoured to represent the Protestant rule of faith. But so much merriment, which might be excused on some other occasions, would be highly incongruous, if not profane, in so sacred and serious an argument. He must not therefore expect to be "answered accord-

ing to his folly." I have often admired, when I have been told with what a strange applause these Dialogues were received, by some of those that account themselves the only Catholics. But, I must confess, I can scarce believe they could seem agreeable to any, that had the least sense of true piety.

The design is, to reduce supposed heretics to the communion of the Church of Rome, out of which they think there is no salvation ; and the whole discourse is concerning the interpretation of the holy Scriptures ; one of the most weighty points, and of the greatest importance to our common Christianity. Now to see a man do nothing but toy and fleer, and not to have so much as one serious word, all the while he is speaking of so divine a subject as that is, can be approved by none, but those that have lost very much of that religious respect that is due to sacred things. However, they that are wont to be so exceeding impatient at anything that does but look like jesting, and that too, where the matter is so very comical that it can scarce be mentioned without provoking a smile : they that cannot endure to hear some pretty tale, or strange miracle recited out of their own legends, should at least be so impartial as to admonish their writers to use greater caution, and express more reverence, when they are treating of the Word of God.

But yet, it may be, this author's lightness might have been better excused, he might have been patiently suffered to enjoy the pleasure of his imaginary victories, if he had brought any thing that looked like a solid argument : but the vanity is unpardonable when he triumphs so gloriously in his own conceit, laughs at his adversary, and insults over him with so much scorn, and yet is not able to bring the least show of any substantial proof against him ; nothing but one slight threadbare fallacy, that runs through every line of the whole discourse. To make it appear that this is the plain case betwixt Isaac and Ishmael, I shall take but a very short view of the Preface and Dialogues ; and then consider the principle upon which his strange confidence is built.

He begins his Preface to the Children of the Reformation thus : " Be not concerned to know whose hand it is that holds the link, but follow the light it gives : reach your hand to receive *this treatise*, which marks the shore where the ark of our Reformation, shattered by a deluge of troubles, may rest ; which is a holy liberty to all and each person to believe or not

believe, act or not act, as he pleases, with a safe conscience, according to the principles of our Reformation." This is pretty well for the first stroke. Afterwards he comes to tell you, that, "this is the scope and end of his following treatise, that whereas our rule of faith, as," says he, "I will prove by the unanimous consent of our whole Reformed Church, is Scripture, or God's written Word, as interpreted by each person of sound judgment.—That every one ought to be permitted to believe what he please.—That it is quite against the spirit of reformation to censure, oppose, or blame the doctrine or tenets of any congregation, or of any doctor of the Reformed Church, because that any doctrine professed by any Christian congregation whatever (the Popish excepted), or that ever was delivered by any man of good judgment of the Reformation, since the beginning of it, until this day, is as truly and really the doctrine of the Reformation, as the figurative presence, or King's supremacy is." Here he acquaints us with the grand design of this noble undertaking; and the rest of the preface, and all the Dialogues that follow it, are spent in nothing but idle descant upon this principle. That which he is constantly attempting, is to make the Reformation look as contemptibly as it is possible; and to this purpose he makes choice of an assertion which, if rightly understood, we shall not deny; and when he has wilfully, I believe, mistaken the meaning of it, he draws a very wise consequence from it, and then almost splits his spleen with laughing at this lucky invention, that came into his head I know not how. But it must be confessed, he has taken the most effectual course to render the Reformation sufficiently ridiculous by dressing it up in his own coat. But now—enter Isaac and Ishmael.

In the first Dialogue* his business is to persuade us, that "It is the doctrine of the Reformation, that we may, with a safe conscience, be to-day Protestants, to-morrow Lutherans; in France Huguenots, in Hungary Antitrinitarians, in Poland Socinians, and in London, of any religion but Popery." And now any man would expect that this heavy charge should be made good by some authentic testimonies of all the Reformed Churches; or, at least, that it should be shewn out of the writings of some of their approved authors. But not a word of this; all the proof we can get from him here is, that some of the first Reformers changed their opinions in some things.

* Pag 3.

And suppose they did ; have not many of the Romish communion done the same ? The English Liturgy has had some few alterations made in it, since it was first established : and what then ? Have not their Breviaries and Missals, &c. undergone greater changes than our Book of Common Prayer ? This is a very feeble way of arguing, to bring that for a proof which indeed is none ; or if it were, might be so easily retorted upon himself.

In the second he pursues the same argument ; but still proceeds, as he does from the beginning to the end, upon the mistaken sense of the Protestant principle.

Upon which in the third* he will have it “ a doctrine of the Reformation, that any woman or tradesman has as much power for to preach and administer the sacraments, as the richest bishop in England.” But to be sure he never forgets his main point : † “ Believe what you please.”

And in the fourth he would persuade us, it is the “ doctrine of the Reformation, that men may live as they please” too ; as if we allowed as great a licentiousness and corruption of manners, as any of the casuistical Divines of the Church of Rome.

In the fifth, he returns again to his liberty of believing any thing ; and to fasten this upon us, he produces some scattered imperfect sentences, which he acknowledges we of the Church of England do not approve of ; and these too he generally perverts, directly contrary to the intent of those very authors from whence he takes them. And after all, for fear these should not be enough to do his business of rendering the Reformation odious and ridiculous, he is fain to pick up, and add to the number of his quotations, some passages out of notorious heretics and apostates, according to his wonted candour and ingenuity.

In the sixth, ‡ he will needs “ shew you how by the principles of our Reformation, you can be as good a Papist as the Pope, one principle excepted :” and what that is he tells us afterward : § “ Believe whatever you please of Popery, provided you believe it because you judge by Scripture it is true, and not because the Pope or the Church says it ; you will never be a Papist, but a perfect Reformed.” Then he mentions some things, wherein, he would have us think, the Church of England and some Protestant writers, were perfectly agreed

* Pag. 25.

† Pag. 65.

‡ Pag. 28.

§ Pag. 67.

with the Church of Rome. But these make but little to his purpose ; for suppose there were no other points in difference betwixt us, yet there is not one instance of those he has brought, wherein, when the authors come to explain themselves farther, he will not find a very great distance betwixt that which they allow, and the received doctrine of the Romish Church.

In the seventh, after some childish reflections on the Calendar, he falls upon the same subject again, to which the same answer may be sufficient. But that Isaac may shew himself no changeling, he sticks close to his beloved conclusion still :* “ Believe whatever doctrine you will, either Popery, Judaism, Protestancy, Arianism, or what else you please, provided you judge by Scripture it is true, and that you believe it, not because this or that church, congregation, or doctors believe it, but because yourself judges it to be true, you will be a true child of the Reformation.” And when he has spent a little more chat upon this, he returns again to proving his principle ; as if he were resolved to torment his reader with endless repetitions, or that he were conscious to himself that all he had said about it before was little to the purpose. Then he very gravely tells Ishmael, that † “ his best way will be to lay Scripture aside ;” and at last he slides into a wild kind of discourse of Paganism. The occasion he takes is this : Dr. Stillingfleet, ‡ as all Protestants generally do, had charged the Church of Rome with idolatry, and written many things on that argument, which never yet received any answer, and I am apt to believe never will. Upon this, Isaac, who is always ready with his consequences, infers for us, that “ our land therefore had in Paganism, as good a religion as it received by Austin in Popery.” § This we utterly deny : for if the religion which was preached here by Austin the monk, had been the very same which is at this day professed in the Roman communion ; as it is evident in many particulars it was not ; yet, I say, if it had, we should still have thought it far better than the most refined Paganism : because they still retain all the articles of the ancient catholic faith, though mixed with many corruptions of their own. But if, setting aside what they do preserve of the true primitive Christianity, the comparison were to be made between Paganism and those additions only

* Pag. 75.

‡ Pag. 86.

† Pag. 85.

§ Ibid.

they have since tacked on to their creed; it might then be an employment worthy the pen of such a workman as Isaac, to let the world understand on which side the advantage lies. But the Doctor had affirmed that the Pagans adored the true God under the name of Jupiter; and he that denies it must be very little acquainted with the heathen theology, whatever he be with the Christian. The thing is evident enough from that place in the Acts,* where Aratus is quoted by St. Paul; and any one that will but consult the poet himself, and the Scholiast† upon him, will see he cannot be otherwise understood; and the Doctor had proved it at large, beyond all contradiction, by great variety of testimonies out of the best authors, both ancient and modern: but Isaac, who seems to have at least as much aversion for heathen Greek as for heathen idolatry, very discreetly passes all this over, as if there had not one word been said; and instead of answering, only strives to exercise his talent in his idle fleering way; and so sets up the Doctor for a great advocate of Paganism, and thinks, that “by changing Christianity for it, he may expect to be his holy Jupiter’s high priest, in London Capitol.”‡ And as soon as he had left this sting in the tail, he concludes his book very abruptly, without so much as bidding his dear Ishmael adieu; contrary to all the laws of dialogue. But if any such revolution as he dreams of should happen, and heathenism should be restored again (as it will be none of his fault if it be not), he need not fear any man’s being preferred before him. He would be the fittest votary for such an altar: for besides his many excellent personal qualifications for an arch-flamen, and the particular services he has done the cause, fortune has been always observed to be very prodigal of her favours to such profound sages as he. If either merit or good luck will do the business, it is ten to one on Isaac’s side. For he is so very judicious, that he does not perceive that what he objects to the Doctor, reflects no less upon St. Paul; who, it is plain, understood Aratus as he does; and applied that to the true God which was spoken concerning Jupiter. So that all the sport he makes himself about Paganism will be found, in the consequence of it, little better than downright blasphemy. But indeed, at his rate of arguing, he may as soon prove whom he pleases a Pagan, as himself a Chris-

* Acts xvii.

† Vid. Schol. in Arat. See Dr. Stillingfl. Def. of the Disc. of Idolat. part 1. pag. 6, 8, &c.

‡ Pag. 90.

tian, by anything that appears in these Dialogues. And of this he seems apprehensive enough; he could not forbear acquainting us what opinion he thought the world was like to have of him; his own conscience reminded him what kind of censures he might justly expect. For, says he:* “As to my religion, I doubt not but that my readers will be divided in their judgments of me; if a Papist reads me, he will swear I am an Atheist; if a Protestant, he will say I am a Papist, and that my drift is to cast dirt upon his Church; the honest Quaker will say I am a profane man; others perhaps will say, I am of no religion, but a despiser of all.” This, I believe, is very rightly guessed: they that read him will be apt to pass such judgments upon him, as he surmises; and he knows best, and any one may see, what occasion he has given them to entertain such thoughts of him; but how he will be able to excuse himself from any of these imputations, I leave it to him to be considered of at his leisure.

There is indeed such a vein of profaneness, that discovers itself in the whole contexture of his Dialogues, which scarce any one could be guilty of, that were not, what he very reasonably imagines his readers will think him, a conceited scornful despiser of all religion. He does so frequently sport himself with an abusive application of Scripture expressions, that it is hard to judge, whether his principal design were to ridicule the Reformation or the Bible: but it is certain, the trifling way in which he treats them, argues a very great contempt of both. Every leaf affords us instances of this; I will mention but one or two. When Ishmael† was not satisfied, that “if a silly woman, cobbler, or other tradesmen, read Scripture, and give their sense of it, that must be called the doctrine of the Reformation:” Isaac replies with the greatest seeming gravity imaginable, but as much real scorn and derision as is possible; as his usual manner is:‡ “Do not limit God’s infinite goodness, by measuring his mercies towards his creatures with your narrow apprehensions: take notice,” he says, “he has chosen the weak and contemptible of the world, for to confound the strong ones: I confess unto you, Father, that you have hid these things,” &c. It is enough to occasion something of horror in any sober Christian, to think that the infinite goodness and mercies of Almighty God, and his Holy Word, should

* Pag. 66.

† Pag. 24.

‡ Ibid.

be thus shamefully exposed by such an idle scoffing companion. But to omit many more, there is one passage, which, I believe, no man can read, and I wonder how he could write it, without trembling. Ishmael had told him plainly :* “All that your discourse drives at, by what I can perceive, is either to beat me from the Reformation, by shewing me the absurdity of its Rule of Faith ; or oblige me to believe scandalous and blasphemous tenets, as necessary sequels out of that rule.” And he cannot deny that that is apparently the drift of all the impertinent tattle that makes up his seven Dialogues. But what answer does Isaac give to this? “Why,” says he, “the Lord, who is the searcher of hearts, knows you misconstrue my intentions :” he makes the most solemn appeal to the Divine Omniscience, in the most sacred expressions, for the vouching of that which flatly contradicts his own conscience. For that can tell him, and that God, whom he invokes so presumptuously, does know, that what he makes Ishmael to speak, is the very truth ; that his whole discourse is little else but one continued irony ; and that the only design of it, is to laugh men out of their religion, and draw them over to the Church of Rome, by charging the Protestant Rule of Faith with the greatest absurdities he could possibly devise. And he that dares thus boldly call God to witness that which himself knows, and all the world sees, is most certainly false, seems to have lost all sense of the Deity, and is advanced some degrees beyond that licentiousness, and Paganism too, which he very industriously, though without any success, strives to prove very easily deducible from the principles of the Reformation.

After this, the uncharitable censures he passes upon Protestants, may seem but a slight and venial sin : he that is not afraid openly to affront Almighty God, will be little concerned for the severest and most unjust reflections he can make upon his neighbour. But to shew his kindness, he tells us, that† “We are so far from any smack of hypocrisy, that you shall not see in all London the least appearance of virtue.” He that will not discover so much as this, in that great city, must look upon it with a very spiteful and malicious eye. God be praised, there are many examples there of a truly sober and Christian life ; and if all be not such, we heartily lament it ; though I believe it is no more than other populous places are guilty of ; and if he had pleased, he might as reasonably have

* Pag. 83.

† Pag. 41.

levelled the same objection against all the great societies of men in the world. Were I minded to imitate his rash way of judging, I could requite him with a large relation of the lewdnesses that have been commonly practised in Rome itself; and tell him of some religious houses, and whole countries that have adhered to that Church, where the looseness of their lives has been more catholic than their faith; and all this attested, beyond denial, by their own authors. But I do not like his pharasaical way of justifying ourselves, by reproaching others. The scandalous living of some of all religions, proves nothing effectually, but the great corruption of human nature, that will not always be reformed by any. Therefore, to insist upon this in a matter of dispute, is but a frivolous thing at the best; for a true doctrine will be true still, notwithstanding the unsuitable lives of those that profess it. However, I must needs commend Isaac's ingenuity, that was so wise as to understand his own talent, and having thrust himself into a controversy, chooses the weapon he was best able to manage, and so makes railing serve instead of argument, and contents himself with aspersing those he cannot confute.

Most of the second-hand quotations, he makes use of, are mustered up upon the same grand design, of endeavouring to blemish the whole Reformation, by imputing unto it many gross corruptions, both in doctrine and practice. To examine them all would be a very troublesome and unnecessary labour; for whatever the private opinions of Luther or Calvin, or any man else may be, we esteem ourselves no more obliged to embrace them as articles of our belief, than he thinks himself bound to receive all the positions which Bellarmine, Perron, or the Sorbonne, have at any time advanced for undoubted doctrines of the catholic Church. And to shew you how often he mistakes the scope of his authors, and to defend their true sense against his little cavils, would engage me in so many tedious digressions, nothing at all to the main purpose, that I think it very unreasonable, that either I or my reader should be forced to undergo so severe a penance for Isaac's impertinence. It may be sufficient, therefore, only to observe by the way, that many, if not all the passages he has produced out of some Protestant writers, by which he attempts to discredit their religion, are taken upon trust from Mr. Brerely: and if he had not, by very good luck, published his *Apology*, our *Pax Vobis Dialogues*, as well as some others, had wanted many choice embellishments. I will give you a knot of them as they

lie together : Musculus, a learned Lutheran, writes thus :*
 “Thus it is with us at present, that if any be desirous to see a great rabble of knaves, turbulent spirits, deceitful persons, cozeners, and debauched men, let him go to a city where the Gospel is purely preached, and he shall find them by multitudes ; for it is more manifest than the day-light, that never were there more unbridled and unruly people among the Turks and Infidels, than the professors of the Reformed Gospel.” Luther himself says as much :† “The world grows daily worse, and men are now more covetous, revengeful, and licentious, than they were in Popery.” Mr. Stubs says no less :‡ “After my travels round about all England, I found the people in most parts proud, malicious, ambitious, and careless of good works.” Mr. Richard Jeffrey, in his Sermon at St. Paul’s Cross, printed anno 1604 :§ “I may freely speak what I have plainly seen, that in Flanders, never was there more drunkenness, in Italy, more wantonness, in Jewry, more hypocrisy, in Turkey, more impiety, in Tartary, more iniquity, than is practised generally in England, and particularly in London.” I have taken these four, as I found them altogether, without adding or diminishing a syllable. In the margin I have referred to the places in Mr. Brerely, where they may be easily seen and compared ; and where any one that takes pleasure in discovering petty larceny, and is not unwilling to be at the trouble, may at any time be furnished with plenty of instances in the same kind. In these I have chosen out of the rest, Isaac is very careful to keep close to his voucher, seldom varying in the least from the translation of the Apologist, and to be sure, never adding a word more than he found there. And to make it evident, almost to a demonstration, that he never vouchsafed to consult the authors themselves ; besides the wonderful harmony betwixt him and Brerely, he pitches upon some, which, I am pretty confident, he never saw in all his life. Luther and Musculus, are names that must needs have come to his ears, and some of their works, it is possible, he may have seen ; but for Stubs and Jeffrey, let him affirm, if he dares, that he ever knew any more of them, than what he found laid up to his hand in that common storehouse ; and which, to be just to him, he has copied out very faithfully. But for what end he has done it, I cannot conjecture ; for

* Pag. 40. Brerely, Apol. p. 590.

† Pag. 40. Brerely, p. 414.

‡ Pag. 41. Brerely, p. 591.

§ Pag. 41. Brerely, p. 589.

suppose that a loose conversation were, as he imagines, exception enough against the truth of a doctrine; and that we should confess the charge, which he cannot prove; and that his own Church should plead not guilty, which, I believe, he will not be over forward to maintain; and that popular invectives against such vices, as have been always too common, might be allowed for an exact history of the times, which no wise man before Isaac ever thought; yet for all this, it must certainly be a piece of the highest injustice to condemn the present age for the sins of their great grandfathers; and execute the credit of this generation, when the youngest evidence that is brought against it is upward of fourscore. What pity it is that we want a Brerely the second! That Mr. Stubbs should happen to write in Queen Elizabeth's days!* And that it should be eighty-four years, almost complete, since Mr. Richard Jeffrey preached before my Lord Mayor! What hard shifts men put themselves to, when they are resolved to find any pretence to vilify their brethren!

But I shall pass over these, and the other quotations he has borrowed of Mr. Brerely, without any further inquiry about them; and consider one, which, I believe, is properly his own. He repeats it in almost every leaf, and it is the main hinge on which he makes the controversy to turn; if you rob him of this, you utterly ruin his whole design. He lays it down boldly for the grand principle of all the Reformation, and often fixes it in particular upon the Church of England; and in one place he tells you† it is "in the sixth of our Thirty-nine Articles," where he makes us to speak thus: "We have no other rule of faith but Scripture, as each person of sound judgment in the Church understands it, and what is proved by it." In what sense we could admit of this rule he has made for us, shall be considered hereafter; in the mean time it must argue a very strange degree of assurance, when a man can have the face to refer to a particular passage in those Articles that are in every one's hands; when it is apparent as the sun, that there are no such words, nor any like them, neither in the sixth, nor any other of all the Thirty-nine. In that he pretends to recite, there is not a syllable of "each person of sound judgment;" the very subject of it is not concerning the interpretation, but the sufficiency of the Scriptures. For that which our Church teaches us in that place, is nothing

* Oct. the 17th, 1604.

† Page 20.

but this : that " Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation ; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."* The rest of the Article tells us only what books we receive for canonical. Now let any one compare the words as I have truly given them, with those that Isaac has hammered out of his own brain, and then judge what a trusty champion he is like to prove. Really it is a very severe trial of a man's patience, to be condemned to the drudgery of exposing such shameless palpable forgeries, especially when he constantly treats us with so much scorn and derision, as is scarce to be equalled by any thing, but the impudence of the author and weakness of his argument. It may be easily guessed what sincerity he has used in his other quotations, by the exactness he has shewn in this, where the cheat may be presently detected by every English reader. And therefore, when he makes all other Protestant Churches to maintain the same principle, I think it may be done with the like fidelity. I have made some search, and cannot meet with any such expressions, as he tells us of, in the confession of any Reformed Church in Europe ; if he knows where they are to be found, I desire he would be pleased to direct us to the place. If he refuse me this kindness, as I know he will, then he must excuse us if we suspect him for dealing fraudulently here too ; and look upon him, for ever hereafter, as one that has been set up to ridicule the Protestant religion, with a few antic mimical tricks, at the expense of his honour and conscience.

But if we should be so civil to him, as to grant that he has spoken nothing but truth ; and suppose, for the present, that he had used the same faithfulness in setting down the Article, &c. as he has done in transcribing Mr. Brerely, yet I cannot perceive how he will be able wholly to free his own Church from those very inconveniences he strives to charge upon ours. " The Protestant rule of faith," as he says, " is Scripture, as each person of sound judgment understands it." He cannot tell us of one Protestant Church that has expressed itself in these terms. However, to gratify Isaac, let it be so : what then ? Why then, says he, " whatever any man of sound judgment has ever thought to be the sense of Scripture, must

* Art. 6.

be allowed to be the doctrine of the Reformation." By the "man of sound judgment," he always understands every Protestant of any denomination whatsoever. And by this device he thinks he has us fast enough; and imagines that he can make the whole Reformation guilty of the most absurd and contradictory opinions that ever were vented, or that he can pretend to have been vented by any one of all those that have refused communion with the Church of Rome, from Luther's time to this day. And are we not like to be finely represented now, when such a slippery companion as Isaac, shall not only undertake to make principles, but must needs be drawing of consequences for us too? This must be confessed to be something hard, and unequal dealing: but yet if we should yield him all he desires, and allow that he has laid down the "Protestant rule of faith," with all the sincerity imaginable, and that the consequence he has drawn from it is firm and undeniable, yet the Church of Rome is like to gain but little advantage by it. For either they have some rule of faith, in which they are all agreed, or they have not: if they have not, the boast of infallibility is come to nothing, and they must not pretend any longer to build upon a rock: if they have any such rule, then the most absurd and impious opinions that ever have been maintained by any of those that receive that rule, as all Papists are supposed to do, must be acknowledged to be the doctrine of the Church of Rome, by the same way of arguing that Isaac would have the opinion of every Protestant in the world to be the doctrine of the whole Reformation. And then all the lewd, immoral, and licentious resolutions of their casuists; all the turbulent antimonarchical and idolatrous tenets that have been propagated against them by any of their canonists, schoolmen, or other writers, must pass for the doctrine of their Church. If it should be replied, that they do not think themselves bound to defend the peculiar sentiments of private doctors, because, though the rule by which they are to be guided be never so true and certain in itself, yet they, every one of them, may be extremely mistaken in the application of it: they know that we are wont to plead the same thing: this therefore will excuse us from the imputation of any strange opinions that may have been held by some of our communion, as effectually as it can free them from the guilt of those dangerous errors that have been taught, and zealously promoted, by the greatest men of theirs. So that hitherto we stand, at least, upon equal terms; nay, I am sure,

any misapplication of the rule is far more pardonable in a Church that never thought herself infallible, than it can be in that that pretends to be so.

Isaac is something sensible that his argument might be retorted upon him in some such manner as this, and therefore he takes all the care he can to prevent the objection. For, says he, "Be pleased to observe the difference betwixt Popery and our Reformation; the rule of faith, in Popery, is Scripture, as interpreted by the Pope and Council, or their Church; they will admit no other; consequently, no doctrine is to be called Popery, but what is judged by the Pope, and his Church or Council, to be the sense of Scripture; and if any doctor, or university, holds any sense contrary to theirs, it is to be called the doctrine of that particular person, and not the doctrine of the Popish Church, because their rule of faith is not Scripture as interpreted by any person of sound judgment, but as interpreted by their Pope and Council."* This is the way by which he thinks to defend the Papists, from the grand absurdity he every where presses upon the Protestants; and this indeed is now become the common evasion. Tell them of doctrines that have been generally received by them; bring the most express words of their most learned and approved authors, the most admired by the people, and encouraged by their superiors; nay, some of them canonized too; they can easily blow away all these: and whatever any or all of them held, when they please, it shall be but the opinion of a private doctor: they will hear of nothing for the doctrine of their Church, though it has passed never so long, not only without a censure, but with the highest approbation, unless we can shew it has been formally confirmed by the great names of Pope and Council. If you talk of any thing less, they make lamentable complaints of being misrepresented; so that, as the matter has been managed by them of late, it is much easier to confute almost any point of Popery, than to make them confess what it is. Well! let us see, however, how bravely Isaac will defend his Church against the force of his own consequence. "The Protestant rule of faith," says he, "is Scripture, as each person of sound judgment understands it; therefore, whatever Luther, or Calvin, or any other of sound judgment, that owns this rule, have taught or may teach, must be the doctrine of the Reformation." This I am forced to

* Pag. 22, 23.

repeat so often, is the complete epitome of all the seven Dialogues ; and if this should not prove good logic, there is not a dram of sense in them. To make the experiment, we will try how the consequences will fit when it is applied to the other side. "The rule of faith in Popery," as Isaac tells us, "is Scripture, as interpreted by the Pope and Council ;" therefore, by his own way of inferring, whatever Thomas, or Suarez, or any other of sound judgment, that owns this rule, have taught, or may teach, must be the doctrine of the Church of Rome. This, I believe, he will be very unwilling to yield ; but there is no remedy, he must be forced to do it by his own argument. The inference, from both rules, is made exactly in the same way, and he that can discern the least difference, must be a man of more than ordinary subtlety. If he think to excuse his Church, by saying, that their authors may mistake the sense of the Pope and Council ; he cannot be so ignorant, but that he must know that we believe that ours too may sometimes mistake the sense of the Scripture ; and he is not so partial, but that he may see that the same answer will bring one side off as fairly as the other. But honest Isaac is not at all apprehensive of the danger of the desperate stroke he has made ; he is perpetually sneering, and seems wonderfully jocund ; he pleases himself with the conceit that he has caught a Protestant, but I would wish him to have a care it does not prove a Tartar. If he will not quietly let go the hold he thinks he has got of the Reformed, he shall quickly understand that he has taken the Romish Church in the same noose. This alone might be sufficient to shew the weakness and inconsequence of the only argument he brings against us ; if he can do any hurt, it is to none but the Popish cause, and we have more reason to pity than to fear such an unskilful and unfortunate combatant, that directs a furious blow at his adversary, that slides off without any harm done, but gives himself a mortal wound.

And here I might take my leave of Isaac, and dismiss this argument. But I find the Interpretation of Scripture is grown the common theme upon which many of our Popish writers delight to exercise their pens. Among other little essays on the same subject, I have seen one set out not long since, by Mr. P., which, because it is so like Isaac's in the main design, I cannot let pass without taking some notice of it. He calls it, "A full and clear Exposition of the Protestant Rule of Faith. With an excellent Dialogue, laying forth the large

extent of true Protestant Charity, against the uncharitable Papists." This is just such another mock title, as his brother Isaac had made use of to recommend his Dialogues ; and it is the only one that I find in my book. But it seems he has several faces to clap upon this little treatise, for fear of discovery. For he tells us in an advertisement at the latter end, that " he has been obliged to prefix different titles to this short discourse." And what occasion should there be for that I wonder? Why, it is by reason of the endeavours he has experienced to be used by Protestant ministers, to keep out of the people's hands all books and papers, which might contribute to the disabusing a nation, the most imposed upon this day in Christendom. If this be all, he had no need of walking in a disguise ; no body had been frightened, if he had appeared in his own likeness. And as for keeping books and papers out of the people's hands, he knows that their people are forbid to look into any of ours, under penalty of a severe censure ; they dare as well read the Bible without license, as the writings of heretics. But we that allow and exhort them to study the Scriptures, think that they may there see so much of the truth of the religion we profess, that we are not afraid to trust them with the perusal of Popish authors ; only advising them not to suffer themselves to be prevailed upon by any specious show of argument, without consulting those who may be better able to discern the fallacy, than they can be generally supposed to be. But as for Mr. P. he may hereafter save himself the trouble of different titles ; if a man may judge of the rest by this, we need not be solicitous to keep his writings out of our people's hands. No, it may be some confirmation to a Protestant in his religion, when after so much boasting he shall find so little said against it.

The full and clear Exposition, as he calls it, consists of three parts. The first, besides some personal reflections, only acquaints us with some differences there have been among Protestants, and some hard words some of them have given one another ; which if he have related never so impartially, our cause is no more concerned in it than his.

The second he calls, "The great extent of Protestant Charity : or, a Dialogue between Eudoxius and Philautus, concerning the Protestant Rule of Faith ; shewing it to be an inlet not only to all Heresy, but even to Turcism, Judaism, and Atheism itself." Here are a great many things boldly undertaken ; and you must believe they are all demonstrated in the

compass of four leaves in quarto. This is something more strange than Homer's Iliads in a nut-shell. I guess he might be encouraged to this brave attempt, by the great reputation that Isaac had won before him. Themistocles could not sleep sometimes, the glories of the Marathonian field ran so in his head. He never mentions his name, but he goes upon the same principle with Isaac: "Scripture as understood by every sound judgment." He argues in the very same way. You shall scarce observe any difference, but only that he is a great deal shorter, and not quite so airy; his Eudoxius does not prattle altogether so flippantly as Isaac. But there is abundant amends made for that; he has outshot him in his own bow. I do not remember that Isaac carried the business any farther than Paganism; but Mr. P.'s Eudoxius leads about his Protestant by the nose, till he has brought him as far as Atheism. But I wonder how he drew him thither: the Protestant, he confesses, grounds his belief only upon the Word of God; therefore he may be an Atheist, and believe there is no God!

This is a greater than any of those unheard of Paradoxes following from the Protestant rule of faith; which makes up his third part. He has seven of them; just as many as Isaac's Dialogues. They are most of them grounded upon extravagant suppositions concerning Protestants; and if we should grant all to be true, he would gain but little by it. Were we as bad as he would make us, yet the worst men may have right notions; and the greatest piety is not always a preservative against error. I need not run over all his Paradoxes to shew you the man; only for example, in his last, among other things almost as groundless, he is so very charitable and wise, as to suppose that there "is nothing so clear, as that the necessity of a handsome maintenance for wife and children, mixed with a fear of being defamed and ruined by the party, if they leave it, is the chief invitation of the Ministers of the Church of England to remain in her communion, as," he says, "many of them have owned to him, (some of which he has reconciled)." What! nothing so clear! I think I could tell him of some things a little clearer. Through what window did this gentleman peep into our breasts, that he has been able to make such a shrewd discovery of our most private thoughts? Is this, does he think, the chief invitation? I presume he has heard, and has been much troubled, no doubt, at what the poor Waldenses and Albigenses,

and other heretics, have suffered in former and later ages too ; or if he will confine us to the Ministers of the Church of England, he knows that some of them heretofore have left their native country and all that they had ; and some that did not make their escape, were taken by the writ *de Hæretico comburendo*. But I will warrant you, this was only to get a handsome maintenance for wife and children ; or for fear of being defamed and ruined by the party. Certainly no man will ever expect that any one should trouble himself to give a formal answer to such stuff as this : nay, any considering person of the Church of Rome will be ready to excuse us, if we should be moved to something of indignation, to see ourselves scandalized, and censured in the most severe and unchristian manner, when all is bottomed upon nothing but the most vain and ridiculous pretence in the world. As for the many, whose confessions he took, and the some, which he reconciled, it would be a mighty satisfaction if he could be persuaded to present us with a list of their names : but, I doubt, by this time, they may be slipt out of his memory.

After he has ended his Paradoxes, he looks back upon his performance, and is so well pleased with it that he makes a question, whether “it can be possible, that any considering, serious, sober Christian, reading his paper with an unbiassed mind, and indifferent reason, should do otherwise than doubt, at least, whether the Protestant rule of faith may be followed in the perilous journey of eternity ?” Yes truly, I take it to be very possible ; and I am confident the more any one considers his paper the more he will be of my mind. He ends all with a long story of an eminent Doctor of the Church of England, very acceptable to the gentry, that had one of the best benefices in our country, that had never in his life preached against the Papists but twice, and it was for that he had been checked by his bishop for not doing it ; and that still lay upon his conscience ; for you must know that this eminent Doctor was a member of a Church he knew to be false, and a guide to others in a way he was sure would never save them. And if he were under such strong convictions, why did not he then return immediately into that which he thought the right way ? Oh ! there was one impediment, *viz.* a wife, which he must provide for, and to become a Catholic would ruin his family. However, upon Mr. P.’s persuasions, he promised, that the spring following, he would go to Rome, and do as his conscience obliged him. But Mr. P. returned

soon after into Flanders, and that very winter the poor gentleman died without any assistance. This must be confessed to have fallen out very unluckily, upon several accounts. Yet to support the credit of the relation, as much as may be, I could wish Mr. P. would acquaint us who this eminent Doctor was, and where the great benefice lay; I fear he has forgotten the names of them both. But I shall not therefore question the truth of the story: be it as he relates, in every particular, there can be nothing of argument drawn from it. For we can tell him of eminent Doctors of the Church of Rome, that have been under great dissatisfaction of mind, and some that have come actually over to the Protestant communion. But what does it signify, if some men change their opinions? All armies will have their deserters; but which side has the juster cause, is not to be estimated by such uncertain measures. By these few instances any one may judge of Mr. P.'s way of proceeding; and what notable observations he is wont to make upon us, and our religion. Therefore what is peculiarly his own, I shall pass over without any further notice; but what he has in common with Isaac and others, concerning the Protestant rule of faith, shall now be considered a little more particularly.

When the Bible began to be commonly translated into the vulgar languages, it was not possible to keep it wholly out of the people's hands. But to prevent the danger of having her errors and innovations discovered by it, the Church of Rome will not allow it to be promiscuously read, but only by such as she is pleased to intrust with special licence for that purpose; and they too must not presume to understand it for themselves, but entirely resign their judgments to such interpretation as she shall be pleased to put upon it. This is indeed an exceeding great degree of caution, but not a jot more than she stood in need of. For when she had for a long time performed all her public offices in an unknown tongue, and robbed the laity of half the communion; when she had introduced a strange worship of relics and images, and set up to herself many mediators of intercession; when she had maintained that Christ was offered every day in the sacrifice of the mass, and taught and done many other things, apparently repugnant to the Word of God; then to secure herself in the possession of these doctrines and practices, it was but necessary that she should lay claim to the sole privilege of interpreting Scripture. This, and nothing but this, could sufficiently guard her against all contradiction. For

whatever exposition she gives of any controverted place, none must dare to call it in question; though she may have frequent occasions to frame glosses, directly contrary to the express letter of the text. Here she is gotten into an impregnable fortress; she can never be forced to yield to the clearest evidence that can be brought, while she is able to make good this unlimited power, of understanding everything in her own sense. No wonder then that the Romanist contends with so much zeal, to bear down all with the judgment of his Church; if he can but gain this one point, he makes himself master of all the rest. And I shall not deny, but that his plea looks speciously enough at the first sight. For when the contest seems to lie betwixt the private spirit, and that of the Church, every man's modesty will strongly incline him to submit quietly to that venerable name; and rather think himself mistaken, than that the Church should be in an error. And it is true indeed, the testimony of the Church is very highly to be valued, if by it they understand the Church that is truly catholic, including the first and purest ages; but if, by the catholic Church, they mean, as the Papists do, only a part, and that the most corrupt part of the modern Church; her testimony or judgment can be but of very little authority, especially when she gives it in her own cause.

We shall not therefore suffer ourselves to be over-borne in the present case, by a confident noise of the catholic Church; but briefly laying down the Protestant and Popish ways of interpreting Scripture, endeavour to make it appear, that they are subject to the same uncertainties that they pretend us to be.

"The Protestant rule of faith," as Isaac will have it, "is Scripture, as each person of sound judgment interprets it:" and Mr. P. expresses it in the same manner. Now, as I have observed before, though Isaac often affirms it very boldly, these words are no where to be found in our Thirty-nine Articles, nor yet in the confession of any other Reformed Church that I have met with. If he can allow himself the liberty, wilfully to misunderstand our rule, and then set it down in such expressions as he thinks may be best exposed, he may easily make an Arian, or a Pagan, or an Atheist, or what kind of creature he pleases, of his poor Ishmael. It is likely he may have seen the very words, as he recites them, or some to the same effect, in some particular author; but he cannot therefore justly charge all the absurdities, he fancies to be in them, upon

any one Church, much less upon the whole body of the Reformation, which is not bound, any more than the Church of Rome, to answer for all the mistakes of every private member within its communion. This, indeed, Isaac would fain make us believe; and that any opinion that ever was started by any Protestant,* “is as truly and really the doctrine of the Reformation, as the figurative presence,” &c. This, he knows, we absolutely deny; but he thinks it necessarily follows from our rule of faith. I have often taken notice of his falseness and insincerity, in representing our rule in such words as he pleases himself, which is enough alone to make all he says of no value, with any honest considering man. But I will not now insist upon that: let our rule be just as he would have it; “Scripture as each person of sound judgment interprets it:” but then he must give us leave to take the words in our own sense; and not force an absurd and ridiculous construction upon them, and then stand laughing by himself, as if he were strangely surprised, as any man might well be, with the pleasantness of the invention. If therefore in the present case, by “a person of sound judgment,” he understands such an one as being duly qualified, with natural or acquired abilities, applies himself seriously to the study of the holy Scriptures, and understands them in their true and genuine sense; we freely acknowledge, that “Scripture, thus interpreted by any man, is the rule of our faith;” and let him make his best of this concession. But if by “a person of sound judgment,” he means such an one as being otherwise rational enough, and of good capacity, is yet, sometimes at least, mistaken in the sense of the Scriptures; so far as he is mistaken, he cannot be said to be “of sound judgment,” neither is any one bound to follow him in his errors. The mistaken sense of Scripture is not our rule of faith, whoever be the interpreter; though he should have the confidence to pretend himself infallible. Mr. P. and Isaac, and some others, will needs make us understand the matter in this last way; as if because we may suppose a man to “be of sound judgment” in some respects, we must therefore grant him to be absolutely so in all. Which is either a very childish mistaking, or a most malicious perverting of our sense; and their whole argument, which proceeds upon no other ground but this, every novice can tell them, is a plain fallacy; *a Dicto secundum quid ad Dictum simpliciter*. And this is all the

* Preface to Pax Vobis.

advantage they have upon him, and yet they lead their Protestant about in triumph, as if they had gained an entire victory; when all the sophistry they have used, is instantly defeated, by the application of one very common and easy distinction.

I have now shewed Isaac's falseness and disingenuity, which is imitated by Mr. P. and others, who have made a rule of faith for the whole Reformation, and the Church of England in particular, which we need not own, in those terms that they have expressed it: or if we should, the grand absurdities they conceit to follow from it, may be easily reflected upon themselves, by their own way of arguing. But indeed, after all, they assault us with nothing but a pitiful fallacy, which they have framed, by taking the words in such a sense, as no Protestant in the world did ever allow. This might be enough to silence all the importunate cavils, with which Isaac and his brethren are wont to trouble us. But the Church of Rome thinks they have us here, at a more than ordinary advantage; and therefore they are perpetually urging us with this, and demanding, with great vehemency, how we are sure that we understand the Scriptures aright? To this we might make a sufficient reply, by a counter-demand, and asking them, how they are sure that their Church understands them aright, or at least, that they understand their Church? Whatever answer they shall think fit to give to this, will, I am sure, serve us as well as them. But for farther satisfaction in this important point, upon which they so much depend; and that I may not seem rather to evade than answer their query, I will first consider the Protestant, and then the Popish rule of faith, that, by comparing them together, it may appear whether theirs affords them such an infallible assurance of belief as they use to boast of; and whether ours leaves us in that mighty uncertainty they are wont to pretend.

Isaac, in the end of his second Dialogue, has summed up the whole charge he has against us in three propositions. For he tells us, in the person of a Protestant of his own creating: * First, Our rule of faith is Scripture, not as interpreted by this or that, but by any man of sound judgment: secondly, It follows hence, that the doctrine of the Reformation must be, and ought to be called, whatever any man of sound judgment says is the sense of Scripture: thirdly, It follows, we may

change religions as often as we please." These few lines contain the substance of all he undertakes to prove, by particular instances, throughout his book; these are the things he is always twitting Ishmael with, and in him the whole Reformation. Mr. P. goes upon the same principle, and his way of arguing is very little different from Isaac's; but both of them being manifestly mistaken in their first and fundamental proposition, as I have shewed, the grand absurdities they charge us with, as following from thence, cannot at all affect us.

To make this appear farther yet, and to prevent all cavilling, that may be occasioned by any ambiguity of expression, we affirm, that "Scripture rightly interpreted, is the Protestant rule of faith." This we desire to follow, and no other; this we think sufficient to bring us to salvation, without the help of oral, or any kind of unwritten traditions. And so by explaining the term, "by any man of sound judgment," by the word "rightly," which is equivalent to it, but cannot be so easily wrested to a wrong sense; it is manifest, that all Isaac's idle drollery, and Mr. P.'s graver triumph, must come to nothing; because they both depend wholly upon the equivocal acception of one single phrase. But though we may, without any difficulty, clear ourselves from the frivolous cavils that are taken from the signification, which they would make dubious; yet the great question still remains, who they are that may be sure they "rightly interpret the holy Scriptures?" The Protestants are persuaded that this may be done by every sober Christian: they of the Church of Rome are of opinion, that no private man must presume to pretend unto it; but that it is reserved as the peculiar privilege of the Pope and Council, whom they esteem infallible. This is what they hold on both sides, as to this matter, and which of these may be safely relied on, in order to the searching out the true sense of the Word of God, shall be now examined. And first, for the Protestant rule of faith, which is Scripture rightly interpreted, I will endeavour to prove these three things.

1. That the holy Scripture is so plain in all things necessary to salvation, that it may be rightly understood, or interpreted, by any man of sound judgment.

2. That there are certain ways and means, which will not fail to bring those, that daily use them, to a right understanding, or interpretation of it, in all those necessary things.

3. That we may be as unquestionably assured of the true

sense of Scripture, thus interpreted, as it is possible for any man to be of the sense of any other writing in the world.

If I can prove these things clearly, as I hope to do, then the absurd and ridiculous consequences, which Mr. P. and Isaac would persuade us do follow from the Protestant rule of faith, will be of no force.

I.

The first of these, that the holy Scripture is so plain, in all things necessary to salvation, that it may be rightly understood or interpreted, by any man of sound judgment, is a proposition which one would imagine should not be questioned by any Christian. But it is well known how zealous they of the Church of Rome have been to prove, that the Scripture is very obscure, as if they would pretend to lead men to heaven some other way than that which God has been pleased to reveal unto us in his holy Word. And so they must, if the additional articles of their belief be so necessary to salvation, as they have lately voted they are. For there is not the least mention of them in all the Scripture, and some of them are directly contrary to many express texts. But we that think ourselves obliged to follow that light, which God has there given us, do believe that he has made us able to see it. We are persuaded that the Scripture may be understood by private Christians :

1. Because God intended it for a perfect rule of faith and practice ; and whoever believes and lives according to what is there revealed and commanded, shall be certainly saved. And if the Scripture be sufficient to bring every man to eternal happiness, then every man may understand it so far as it is necessary for the attainment of that end. Of this there is no controversy among Protestants ; but they of the Church of Rome imagine we stand in need of unwritten traditions ; which now by decree of the Council of Trent,* are made of equal authority with the written word. But the plain testimony the holy Scripture gives concerning its own fulness and sufficiency, will easily outweigh the bold determinations of a packed Synod. Before God had communicated the clearer manifestation of the Gospel, there was enough revealed in the law to save those that conscientiously observed it : as is plainly declared by the Prophet Ezekiel :† “ I gave them my statutes, and shewed

* Sess. 4. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 746. Lut. Par. 1672.]

† Ezek. xx. 11.

them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them." And Moses himself had enforced the obedience of the Israelites upon the very same consideration:* "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them." Here is a promise of life made to those that should observe the statutes and judgments, which God gave them by his servant Moses; which cannot be understood of this temporal life only, because the best men were often cut off in the midst of their days, and frequently suffered greater adversities than the most profligate sinners. The Jews therefore have constantly believed, that it had a respect to the life to come, as well as this. And St. Paul † applies it twice in the matter of our justification; which can have regard to nothing else but the everlasting bliss of the other world. And when the lawyer in the Gospel had made that most important demand:‡ "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" our blessed Lord refers him to what was written in the law; and upon his making a sound and judicious answer, approves of it; and for satisfaction to his question, tells him, "This do, and thou shalt live." And the Apostle having commended Timothy § for his early knowledge in the holy Scriptures, assures him, "that they were able to make him wise unto salvation:" and then adds further, "that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And if it be profitable for instruction, it may certainly be understood; if it will make the man of God perfect, then human traditions must be needless and superfluous. There is nothing can be evidenced by more plain and express proofs, than that the Scriptures alone contain sufficient directions for the attainment of everlasting happiness, and that they were written for that very purpose; and therefore we may conclude, that they are not unintelligible. For it would not be consistent with the Divine goodness and wisdom, if he should give us a rule that were either defective or obscure; especially in a matter of that infinite concernment. If it should be said, as it is, that all may be cleared by the interpretation of the Church; that shall be farther considered hereafter. In the meantime let them take heed, lest while they strive to magnify

* Lev. xviii. 5.

† Luke x. 25, &c.

‡ Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.

§ 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17.

their Church, they do not reflect dishonourably upon God ; as if he had made the way to salvation so very dark and intricate, that it is impossible to find it out, unless a man will resign his whole understanding to the conduct and management of a certain Church ; which at last, after all the noise and braving we have had about it, proves to be nothing in effect, but a private confessor or a parish priest, who, by their own confession, may be as blind and ignorant as another man. But let them flatter themselves as they please, with an opinion of some greater evidence ; we are contented to build our faith upon the Word of God, which we are fully persuaded may be as safely relied on, and as easily understood, as the canons and decrees of a General Council, or the pretended infallibility of the Bishop of Rome. For these we know may purposely perplex the truth, and by their sophistry make the plainest things look very intricate and dubious ; that by this means they may detain the people in such a stupid ignorance, as may incline them to yield a blind obedience to that boundless authority they would usurp over their consciences. But we are sure the most wise and gracious God will deal with us in another manner ; he will hide nothing from us that is in any way necessary to the salvation of our souls ; and therefore those divine revelations that were given us for that end, cannot be so obscure, as they would make them.

2. This will appear farther, if we consider that the holy Scriptures were directed to all ; all are concerned in the doctrine contained in them ; all are commanded to read, or hear them read ; from whence we must necessarily infer, that they may in some measure be understood by all.

It is manifest, that the holy Scriptures were directed to all. In the law and the prophets we find frequent addresses to the whole house of Israel ; and most of those heavenly discourses of our blessed Lord, that are recorded in the Gospel, were first delivered to the mixt multitude that flocked together to hear him. The Apostolical Epistles, in which are some as difficult passages as in any other part of the written Word, were yet sent, not to some peculiar persons only, distinguished from the rest by the eminency of their place, or the greatness of their abilities, but to the whole congregation of the faithful, without any exception. This appears from the inscription of most of them. That to the Romans is not to the conclave, or any select number, that might pretend to a share in the infallibility ; which had been but reasonable, if St. Paul had known

of any such privilege they had above other Churches ; but it is to “ all that be in Rome,* beloved of God, called to be saints.” The first Epistle to the Corinthians† is directed “ unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” And the second‡ is likewise sent “ unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia.” And so the rest, they are to the Churches, the saints, the faithful, the brethren : which expressions do evidently include the whole community of Christians. And to put this matter out of question, in one of them there is a distinction made betwixt the clergy and laity ; for it is first, “ to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi ;”§ and then is added, “ with the bishops and deacons.” The Apostle here puts a plain difference between these and the former, and it is manifest that he applies himself equally to both ; which he had never done, if he had not thought them both capable of understanding what he had written. Had he been of the opinion of the modern Romanists, he would have written to none but the bishops and deacons ; and only advised the other saints to repair to their spiritual fathers, and take his meaning from them ; or rather, he would have persuaded them to make a journey to Rome, or stay till a General Council could be convened to give them the true sense of his words. But because we find nothing of this, we may conclude, that he esteemed them able to interpret for themselves, without yielding an implicit assent to the judgment of others. And since it is the very same truth that is now laid before us in the holy Bible, which was first preached to promiscuous assemblies, that were made up of persons of very different capacities ; if it were plain and effectual enough, as it was, for the conversion and edification of those that heard it, when it was spoken, there is no reason why we should imagine, that it should become less intelligible, merely by being put into writing.

Besides, the doctrine contained in the holy Scripture, which was thus delivered and sent unto all the faithful, is of that infinite concernment to every man, as has been intimated already, that no less than our eternal salvation depends upon it. For here we have all matters of necessary belief suffi-

* Rom. i. 7.

† 2 Cor. i. 1.

‡ 1 Cor. i. 2.

§ Phil. i. 1.

ciently declared ; and here we may find the most divine and heavenly precepts, by which we are to regulate our actions, in all the various circumstances and conditions of life. And if we fail in either of these, if we happen to be grossly mistaken in any fundamental article, or if we transgress the rules of a virtuous and holy conversation, we shall be adjudged to everlasting flames, for our misbelief or disobedience. But this were not consistent with ordinary justice, if the things themselves for which we suffer were above our apprehensions. No man shall be punished for what was never in his power to prevent. An ignorance that is absolutely invincible, must be always allowed for a legal excuse. If private men could not come to a right understanding of the Scriptures, by all the diligence they can use, they could not be justly condemned for acting or believing contrary to them. No law, or declaration can be binding, till it has been sufficiently promulged and made known, to those whose submission or assent is required to it : so that the Scriptures themselves, if they were not intelligible, could lay no obligation upon us.

But they being of so great and necessary importance, as we are certain they are, to our eternal welfare, it has pleased Almighty God strictly to enjoin us to read them, and to hear them attentively when they are read. There is nothing to which the people of the Jewish Church were more particularly and vehemently exhorted, than the constant and serious study of the law.* “These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” Here is all the care imaginable that can be taken, that the law should be always in their sight, and in their thoughts ; that they should be constantly meditating upon it, and wait all opportunities of discoursing about it. And besides this, the priests were commanded, at certain solemn times, to read it publicly before all Israel ; and to this end they were to † “gather the people together, men, women, and children, and the strangers,” or proselytes, that they might hear, and that they might learn.

* Deut. vi. 6, 7, 8, 9.

† Deut. xxxi. 11, 12.

And according to this excellent institution, when they were come into the promised land,* “there was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.” And in the same manner † “Ezra read in the book of the law of Moses, from the morning until mid-day, before the men, and the women, and those that could understand:” that is, such children as were come to years of discretion; all were admitted that were capable of receiving instruction. And this was continued in our Saviour’s and the Apostles’ time.‡ “Moses and the prophets were read in their synagogues every Sabbath.” The same is observed by the Jews to this very day. And when St. Paul writes to the Church of the Thessalonians, he adjures them in the most solemn manner, that they should take care to have his Epistle “read to all the holy brethren.”§ And he commands the Colossians, when they had read his Epistle|| themselves, to communicate it to be read “in the Church of the Laodiceans; and that they likewise should read the Epistle from Laodicea.” He uses none of that mighty caution that has been so highly applauded by the Church of Rome. He was not sensible, it seems, of the great danger of making heretics, by permitting the Scriptures to be vulgarly read. He was perfectly ignorant of that rare secret, so much boasted of by our modern empirics, to preserve men from error, by depriving them of the means of knowledge. It is plain, that he took the quite contrary course; he ordered those writings that were inspired by the Holy Ghost, to be as publicly and universally read as was possible. And in this, as in other cases, he did but follow the example of our blessed Lord, who always encouraged reading: and commanded his hearers to “search the Scriptures;”¶ and sometimes enjoined them particularly to apply their minds, and use their utmost endeavours to find out the meaning of what they read:** “Let him that readeth understand.” And this he required in the explication of prophecies; which are generally more intricate and obscure, than the precepts of holy living or the historical relations of matters of fact. And yet we see even these are supposed to be intelligible; or else it were very hard

* Josh. viii. 35.

‡ Acts xiii. 15, 27. xv. 21.

|| Col. iv. 16.

¶ John v. 39.

† Neh. viii. 2, 3.

§ 1 Thess. v. 27.

** Mark xiii. 14.

to expect that men should read, much less understand them. For indeed, if the supposition of the Romanists, concerning the obscurity of the Scriptures, were true, their forbidding them to be read, as they do, would not be irrational. But if they are not to be read, why were they written? If they cannot be understood, to what purpose should they be read? It would be very difficult, in the Romish way, to give a satisfactory answer to these demands. But certainly God, that directed the Scriptures to the whole body of the Church; that will punish our ignorance and disobedience so severely; and that has so strictly commanded the hearing and reading of them, would not express himself in such a manner, as should be above the reach of an ordinary understanding; at least in the most important and necessary points.

3. Nay, we find in Scripture many express appeals made to the people, in which they are left to determine the matter in question themselves; which evidently implies, that they may be able to give a true judgment in the case. Thus, in the prophet Ezekiel:* “Hear now, O house of Israel; is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?” And so again in Isaiah:† “O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.” And our blessed Lord demands of the people: ‡“Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?” that is, what is the reason that you that are quick-sighted enough in other matters, do not discern that this is the time, and that I am the Messiah that was to come; but you must still be requiring of signs from heaven; when you might easily convince yourselves out of the Scriptures, that have spoken so much concerning me? For that this was the particular subject and occasion of the discourse, may be seen, Matth. xvi. 1. So that it is plain our Saviour thought that the people might be competent judges, in a matter of the greatest consequence. St. Paul,§ in one case, bids them “judge in themselves.” And in another: “I speak,” says he, “as to wise men: judge ye what I say.”|| He does not refer it to the Pope and Council, but to all those to whom he wrote. And the thing he treats of, is no less than the communion of the body and blood of Christ;¶ which we all confess to be one of the greatest mysteries of our religion; but the Papists have placed it so far beyond the reach of all

* Ezek. xviii. 25.

§ 1 Cor. xi. 13.

† Isa. v. 3.

|| Ib. x. 15.

‡ Luke xii. 57.

¶ Ver. 16.

human understanding, that they have loaded it with a thousand palpable contradictions ; and yet the Apostle proposes it to the whole community of the Church of Corinth, to whom his Epistle was directed, and commands them to judge of what he was to say about it. Our Saviour and all the Apostles usually confirmed their doctrine by the testimony of the law and the prophets ; and Apollos* “ mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.” And in these cases they did certainly leave their hearers to judge of the true sense of the Scriptures they propounded unto them. For it were ridiculous to go about to bring men out of their errors, without giving them the liberty to consider the force and evidence of the arguments we make use of ; and it is utterly impossible to convince them by that they cannot understand. Nay, they of the Church of Rome, after their vehement and copious invectives against a private interpretation, are forced at last to allow of it themselves. For when they would prove their peculiar opinions, as they have in vain attempted, by some passages taken out of the Scriptures, they do by this make the people judges of the sense of those places, and permit them to determine whether they think them pertinently applied. So that not only the Scripture, but the Romanists too do the same thing, which they are wont so superciliously to condemn in us.

4. But we may immediately put an end to this debate, by consulting the text of the holy Scripture : where we shall find all things necessary, so clearly delivered, that an ordinary capacity may be able to discover those truths, which being sincerely followed, will certainly bring us to everlasting happiness. These are in the general of two sorts ; either matters of practice, or matters of faith : they hold their Church to be absolutely infallible in both. As to the former of these, they do not esteem themselves concerned to be altogether so difficult. Though their casuists especially, by their mental reservations ; their directing the intention ; their frequent eluding the dictates of natural conscience, by some nice and frivolous distinction ; and many other devices, have not only obscured, but quite evacuated a great part of our moral duty, as effectually as ever the Scribes and Pharisees did ; yet they will not always contend so zealously with us, about the things of this nature. Though they have a very plentiful stock of confidence to maintain the most absurd assertions ; yet they

* Acts xviii. 28.

are ashamed openly to defend the lewd opinions of many of their most celebrated authors. Because they have debauched men's minds with such false notions in morality, as would be abhorred in the most barbarous parts of the heathen world. Therefore leaving these writers to shift for themselves, and the people to be conducted by them, if they please, they dare not so roundly deny, but that God has revealed himself evidently enough, as to what concerns our practice; but as to matters of faith, there it is that they think the Scriptures the most defective and obscure; and that there is an absolute necessity of having them supplied by their traditions, and explained by their pretended catholic Church. But as whatsoever we are bound to do, is almost confessed to be manifestly contained in the word of God; so we are persuaded, that every thing, of necessary belief, is to be found there too; and that in such clear and perspicuous expressions, that nothing but obstinacy and perverseness can be able to deny it. To make this good, I might run over all the articles of our Christian faith; the incarnation, death, and resurrection of our blessed Lord, the forgiveness of sins, and the rest; and shew how every one of them is confirmed by plain and undeniable testimonies of holy Scripture. But the thing is so generally known, and so very clear, that I need not insist upon it. Indeed the case is very different, as to that Creed which Pius IV. has framed from the decrees of the Council of Trent; and which is now received by the Church of Rome. If we were to seek for a proof of the power of indulgences; the sacrifice of the mass; the seven sacraments; the praying to saints; the worshipping their relics, and images, and the like; we might look long enough, before we should meet with any passage in the whole Bible, that would give the least countenance to these novel and superstitious inventions. But whatever is to be found in any of the Creeds that were allowed by the ancient Church, may be fully proved out of the Scriptures; and our adversaries themselves cannot deny it.

Now if the Scripture was intended for a perfect rule of faith and manners; if it was directed to all, and all are concerned, and commanded to read it; if it appeals to the people, and leaves them to judge of what is said; and if we find all the precepts of a holy life, and all the articles of our Christian faith manifestly laid down and declared in it, then it must be so plain in all necessities, that it may be understood, or interpreted by any man of sound judgment.

It were easy to prove by a multitude of citations out of the

ancients, that they were all of this opinion; I shall only produce a few very plain passages from some of the most eminent of them. Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, tells him, that he would produce such Scriptures,* “as nobody should be able to speak against;” they should be so clear and express for the divinity of Christ, which he is there proving. And a little after he bids him† “attend to those things he was about to recite out of the holy Scriptures, which had no need of being explained, but only heard.” St. Chrysostom finds fault with his hearers, and reprehends them sharply, for their neglect of the holy Scriptures; and because they were so addicted to the pleasing their fancies, that they did not think it worth their while to come to church, unless it were to hear a sermon. This, he tells them, did spoil all. For it was only their carelessness, and want of attention to the word of God, when it was read, that made the preacher necessary. ‡“For what is it,” says he, “that there is need of a sermon? All things are clear and easy in the holy Scriptures; all the necessary things are plain.” There cannot be a more convincing testimony, to shew how far this great and pious man differed in his judgment from the present Church of Rome. He thought the Scripture so very plain in all necessary things, that it needed no interpreter; but that the people, if they were attentive, might understand it so well, that it were far better they should want a sermon, than not have it publicly read in their religious assemblies. The Romanists, on the other side, are willing to imagine, that the Scripture is so extremely obscure, that no man must dare to understand it; but be bound to give himself up to the sense of the Church, whether he knows what that is, or no. They will not allow the laity to read it privately without license; but they do not suffer it to be publicly read at all; the people hear no more of it at the Church, in their own language, but a few shreds and incoherent sentences, which the priest may be pleased, now and then, to scatter among them, in some of his popular discourses from the pulpit. This is never to be reconciled to

* “*Ὅς ἀντεῖπεν οὐδεὶς δυνήσεται.* Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 174. [p. 150. Par. 1742.]

† *Προσέχετε τοιγαροῦν οἷς μέλλω ἀναμνησκείν ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων γραφῶν οὐδὲ ἐξηγηθῆναι δεομένων, ἀλλὰ μόνον ἀκουσθῆναι.* Ibid.

‡ *Διὰ τί γὰρ ὁμιλίας χρεῖα; πάντα σαφῆ καὶ εὐθεῖα τὰ παρὰ ταῖς θείαις γραφαῖς. πάντα τὰ ἀναγκαῖα δῆλα.* Chrys. in 2 Thess. Hom. 3. [vol. 11. p. 528. Par. 1734.]

St. Chrysostom's doctrine, and St. Austin is as express as he, to the same purpose. In his Epistle to Volusianus, when he is mentioning the great depth of the Scriptures, and that there were many mysteries in them, that could scarce be unfolded, and fully understood, though a man of the best judgment and quickest apprehension should study them never so diligently all his life; lest any one should extend this too far, he puts in an exception, and assures us, "That the knowledge of those things in them that were necessary to salvation, was to be attained without any such great difficulty."* And afterwards he tells us, "That the Scripture speaks those plain things which are contained in it, like a familiar friend without disguise, to the heart of the unlearned, as well as the learned."† To pass over divers others, there is one place, in the same Father, that does so positively determine the point, that it must not be omitted on this occasion. "In what is clearly laid down in the Scripture, all those things are found which concern faith and a good life:‡ which is certainly all that is required of us. I might add a great many more testimonies unto these; but I take these to be so very clear and apposite to the present question, that they may be sufficient alone to weigh down all the pretended authorities that can be brought to the contrary.

There are two places especially that are wont to be the most speciously objected against this doctrine: one is, 2 Pet. iii. 16. Where we are told, that in St. Paul's Epistles, "are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." This is the text§ that is the most insisted on; but it has been often, and very lately fully cleared; but because it lies so directly in my way, I am obliged to take some notice of it. We say therefore, that this is only spoken of St. Paul's Epistles; and restrained to some things in those Epistles; and these are only said to be hard,

* Non quod ad ea quæ necessaria sunt salutis, tantâ in eis perveniatur difficultate. August. ad Volusian. Epist. 3. [Ep. 137. vol. 2. p. 402. Par. 1679.]

† Ea quæ aperta continet, quasi amicus familiaris sine fūco ad cor loquitur indoctorum atque doctorum. Ibid. [Ibid. p. 409.]

‡ In iis quæ apertè in scriptura posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia, quæ continent fidem moresque vivendi. Aug. de Doct. Christian. lib. 2. c. 9. [vol. 3. par. 1. p. 24. Par. 1680.]

§ See texts cited by Pap. Examin. page 27, &c.

but not impossible to be understood, unless we will resign ourselves to a supposed infallible guide. And then these hard places are wrested; there is a forced and false meaning put upon them. But by whom is this done? by the “unlearned and unstable;” such as were neither well skilled, nor well settled in the Christian faith. And they dealt in the same manner with the other Scriptures, that were not hard to be understood. For there is nothing so plain, which may not be easily perverted by a weak and fickle judgment; when another that is better informed, and more piously resolved, may be able to see the true sense through a dark expression. Besides, if we suppose these hard things absolutely necessary to salvation, it is likely the same doctrines are clearly taught in other places; and then we may be ignorant of the more obscure, without the hazard of our eternal welfare. But if they be necessary, and no where else to be learnt, St. Peter is scarce to be excused, that has neither explained them himself, nor directed us to that unerring Church, which, as they endeavour to make us believe, is the only one upon earth, that is intrusted with the power and ability to do it. So that the Scripture may be plain enough still in all necessities, for what appears from this first place.

The other is in the same Epistle; and if we attend only to the sound of the words, it may seem, at first hearing, to be directly levelled against private men attempting to understand the Scripture. For “no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.”* So our English translation renders it; but the vulgar Latin is in this place less ambiguous,† “The prophecy of Scripture is not made by a man’s own interpretation.” That is, the holy penmen being inspired, did not write of their own heads, they did not interpret their own minds, but the mind of God. That this is the intent of the place, is plain from the following words: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:” with this agrees the explication of a learned Jesuit; one that is particularly famous for his elaborate commentaries on the Bible: “The Apostle,”‡ says he, “proves, that the prophetic word

* 2 Pet. i. 20. † *Prophetia Scripturæ propriâ Interpretatione non fit.*

‡ *Probat Propheticum Sermonem esse firmiorem, eique studiose nos debere intendere ex eo, quod Prophetia non sit Sermo Prophetæ, sed Dei, &c. Corn. à Lap. in loc.*

is the more firm and valid ; and that we ought diligently to apply our minds unto it ; because that prophecy is not the word of the prophet, but of God, who is the first and infallible truth. This is the thing he says ; the prophecy of Scripture is not made by a man's own interpretation ; *i. e.* it is not of his own invention, as if the prophet of himself should bring to light, interpret and explain hidden and future things, by the sharpness of his own wit : for as Philo says, in his book concerning rewards and punishments, the prophet is God's interpreter, by whom he delivers us his oracles. That this is the sense, appears from the reason which St. Peter, explaining himself, does immediately subjoin. For the prophecy came not," &c. The evidence of truth extorted this free exposition from the pen of a Jesuit. He afterwards, to serve the Popish cause, makes an attempt to draw it another way ; and would have it to argue against men's interpreting Scripture by their own understandings. It is a great advantage indeed, that these men have above the heretics ; if when they have given one sense of a place, and proved it to be agreeable to the scope of the text, they may take the liberty to clap in another, quite different from the former. At this rate they are never like to want Scripture-proofs, for any thing their occasions may require : not excepting the worship of images, or the sacrifice of the mass, the Pope's infallibility, or what they please. But if the first explication be true, as it is certainly here, the other is not only impertinent, but false. These objections therefore do not overthrow the perspicuity of the Scriptures.

This notwithstanding we do not deny, but that there may be many passages very obscure. But seeing those that are plain are sufficient for our necessary instruction, the different apprehensions we may have about the obscure ones, cannot endanger our salvation. And God has thus ordered it, in his infinite wisdom, as is conceived by very pious and judicious men, that what is plain might suffice to direct our lives ; and what is obscure might serve to whet and exercise our industry ; and prevent that foolish contempt that men are apt to have for easy things. But because the Fathers sometimes speak of great mysteries and difficulties, that are in the Scriptures ; the Popish writers generally lay hold on these expressions, and extend them a great deal farther than they intended. When they find any mention of some things that are obscure, they will needs infer, that all are so ; and either wilfully overlook, or disingenuously suppress those other places, in which it is

acknowledged, that whatever is necessary is plain; some of which I have now produced. But though the things may be never so plain in themselves, yet this will not always secure us from being mistaken. Negligence and inadvertency may betray men into errors in the plainest cases. Want of care may cause us to stumble and fall in the smoothest way.

II. To avoid this, there are certain ways and means which will not fail to bring those, that duly use them, to a right understanding or interpreting the Scripture, in all those plain necessary things. It is not my design here to lay down all those rules which may be useful to us in the exposition of Scripture; but only to touch upon some things, which being carefully observed, will by God's blessing secure us from all damnable errors, and give us that knowledge which shall be sufficient to the saving our souls. These I shall divide into preparatory dispositions, which will be requisite for all those that intend seriously to search the Scriptures; and immediate helps, that will be of great use, when we actually apply ourselves to the study of them.

When we intend seriously to search into the sense and meaning of the holy Scriptures, we must come with such preparatory dispositions of mind and affections, that there may be nothing in us that may any way obstruct the discovery of the truth. We must come therefore with a freedom from prejudice; with an earnest desire to learn; with a steady resolution to obey; and with hearty prayers for a blessing upon our endeavours.

1. When we read the Scripture, we should do it with a mind perfectly free from all prejudice. We must not suffer ourselves to be so far prepossessed with any opinion we may have taken up, as to become unwilling to part with it, whenever it shall appear that there is more evidence on the other side. We should examine everything with an absolute impartiality, and indifferency of judgment; and be always ready to yield our assent to the strongest arguments, though they should happen to be never so contrary to any of our former persuasions. He that reads and considers with such an unbiassed mind, is the most likely to apprehend things, as they are in themselves; but all prejudice corrupts the judgment, and inclines it to determine, according to the opinion that it has already embraced: like an eye that is troubled with a suffusion, it tinctures every object it looks upon with its own colour. If

an Arian be resolved in his heresy, he will force any expression to seem to back it ; and make a shift to evade the most undeniable authorities that can be brought for the Divinity of our blessed Lord : and a Socinian will be more irreclaimable than he. If a Papist be fully bent upon his unconceivable doctrine of transubstantiation, and think himself bound to fall down and adore the consecrated wafer ; he will stick close to *Hoc est Corpus meum*, and never be driven from his literal sense ; though himself confesses there are figurative expressions in some of the words of institution ; though the Fathers affirm those to be so ; though St. Paul calls the elements by the name of bread, several times in the same chapter ; and though the point he maintains so zealously, be pressed with infinitely more absurdities and contradictions than ever could be charged upon the grossest superstitions of any of the heathens ; yet all is to no purpose ; you shall never persuade him, he will deny his sense, and reason, and Fathers, and Scriptures, and any thing, rather than part with his monstrous notion. This is a known and pregnant instance of the strange power of prejudice ; but indeed, the fancy they have generally entertained, that their Church is infallible, and that they are bound to understand the Scriptures no otherwise, but as they are interpreted by that Church, is enough alone, if they be true to it, to secure all those of the Roman communion, from ever being convinced by the clearest texts that can be possibly alleged. Other prejudices may be able to blind the judgment in some particular cases, but this will do it effectually in all. If they are but told, that the thing has been determined by her authority, they will run headlong upon the most manifest absurdities, and disbelieve their own senses, before they will question the credit of their Church. This conceit makes them venture upon the worship of images, in spite of the second commandment ; and keep up their prayers in an unknown tongue, notwithstanding whatever St. Paul can say to the contrary. For next to the not reading them at all, their reading them with such a prejudice, is the most certain way never to come to any true knowledge of the Scriptures. He that would understand them aright, must read them with a free and unbiassed judgment.

2. And not only so, but he must likewise have an earnest desire to learn. He that is cold and indifferent, makes himself unworthy of the truth ; but an ardent affection shews what a value we have for it, quickens our endeavours after it, and is

one of the best qualifications we can have for the attainment of it. St. Chrysostom thinks this of itself may be sufficient :* “We have,” says he, “a very loving master, and when he sees that we are solicitous, and that we express a great desire of understanding the Divine oracles, he does not suffer us to stand in need of anything else ; but presently enlightens our minds, and gives us illumination from himself, and according to his gracious wisdom, implants the whole true doctrine in our souls.” To this he applies the words of our Saviour ;† “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” God who has been pleased to make a very plentiful provision for our outward necessities, will not be backward in the supply of our spiritual wants. He that has stored the world with meat and drink, for the gratification of these sensitive appetites he has implanted in us, will certainly take care to satisfy that desire of knowledge, which is the most natural and vehement, as well as the most noble and divine passion of the reasonable soul.

3. But to this desire we must add a steady resolution to obey whatever we shall learn. When we affect to be informed only to humour a vain curiosity, or please ourselves with an opinion of our great skill and insight into the mysteries of religion, without any further design ; this is something like the longing of our first parents after the tree of knowledge. This was the main occasion of all the ancient heresies ; and among these the Gnostics, that took their very denomination from science, were some of the first and greatest corrupters of the Christian doctrine. Such as these are wont not only to run into many foolish and absurd errors, but their lives are generally as licentious as their opinions. And this being so directly opposite to the grand intent of God’s revealing his mind unto us, they that refuse to obey his will, do thereby make themselves incapable of understanding it ; or if they do understand it in some measure, they quickly over-power it by some false conceits of their own. For experience will tell us that a vicious life does by degrees destroy the very principles by which we should act ; and that both by its own natural tendency and the just judgment of God. Thus those lewd persons the Apostle speaks of, though they had no other light but that of nature

* Φιλάνθρωπον ἔχομεν δεσπότην, καὶ ἐπειδὴν ἴδῃ μεριμνῶντας ἡμᾶς, καὶ πόθον πολὺν ἐπιδεικνυμένους, &c. Chrys. in Gen. Hom. 24. [vol. 4. p. 216. Par. 1721.]

† Matth. v. 6.

to guide them ; yet because they held so much of the truth* as was imparted unto them “in unrighteousness ;” therefore “they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” And so they that should be imposed upon by the “lying wonders,” and pretended miracles of that wicked one ; the reason of it is given,† “Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie.” For as we are told in another place,‡ “Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” Errors in practice are apt to breed mistakes in judgment ; and perverseness in the will ordinarily produces blindness in the understanding. But he that is sincere and conscientious in the discharge of his duty, takes the most effectual course to improve his knowledge. So our Saviour declared to the Jews :§ “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” Holiness of life is one of the best means of right information ; and if we are ignorant of what is necessary for us, it must proceed chiefly from the prevalency of our sinful passions.|| “For,” as one has told us very truly, “all things in the holy Scripture are clear to all those that will come to the holy Word with a mind religiously disposed.” That is, all such as are sincerely resolved to obey the truth which they shall there discover.

4. And to this resolution we must join our hearty prayers for a blessing upon our endeavours. We are bound to beg our daily bread of Almighty God, and we ought much more and with greater earnestness, to pray unto him for our spiritual food. David petitions him several times in the same Psalm, in the very same words : “Teach me thy statutes.”¶ And again, “Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”** And, “Give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.”†† Here we have the example of a devout and holy man praying frequently for the Divine assistance in the study of his duty ; and St. James‡‡ assures us expressly, that such prayers as these shall be certainly heard :

* Rom. i. 17, 18, &c.

† 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11.

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 13.

§ John vii. 17.

|| Πάντα γὰρ σαφῆ ἐν τῇ θείᾳ γραφῇ τοῖς βουλομένοις εὐσεβεῖ λογισμῷ προσέρχεσθαι τῷ θεῷ λόγῳ. Epiphani. Hæres. 76. [vol. 1. p. 920. Colon. 1622.]

¶ Psalm cxix. 12, 26, 64, 68, 124, 135.

** Ver. 18.

†† Ver. 73.

‡‡ James i. 5.

“If any man lack wisdom,” true heavenly wisdom, “let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” Not that we are to expect any new revelations; for all this “wisdom” is already revealed in the holy Scriptures; “and so modified,” as St. Austin* expresses it, “that there is no man that may not from thence draw that which is sufficient for him, if he do but come to draw it forth with piety and devotion, as true religion requires.” We must make our humble addresses to the God of all mercy and truth; and he will surely give us that grace which will both enable us to subdue our corruptions, and to gain so much knowledge of his holy will as shall be necessary for the attainment of eternal happiness.

If therefore we come to them without prejudice, with a serious desire to know the truth, and a firm resolution to obey it, and add to all our devout prayers to Almighty God for his gracious assistance, we are in some measure fitly prepared for a right understanding of the holy Scriptures.

But besides these preparatory dispositions, there are some immediate helps that will be of great use when we actually apply ourselves to the study of them: such as diligent and attentive reading; considering the main scope and design of the texts; comparing of places; distinguishing betwixt proper and figurative expressions; consulting with the learned and judicious, and the like.

1. The first and most general of these is diligent and attentive reading. St. Paul commands Timothy,† “to give attendance to reading.” And St. Chrysostom esteems this to be as much as is requisite for the understanding the writings of that great Apostle. He acquaints his hearers what a particular zeal he had for his Epistles, and that the skill he had in these was not owing to any extraordinary parts or acuteness of judgment; but to his being continually conversant in them.‡ “And you,” says he, “if ye will apply your minds carefully to reading, will want nothing else. For the word of Christ can-

* Inest omninò veritas, et reficiendis instaurandisque animis accommodatissima disciplina: et plane ita modificata, ut nemo inde haurire non possit, quod sibi satis est, si modo ad hauriendum devotè ac piè, ut vera Religio poscit, accedat. Aug. de Utilit. credend. cap. 6. [vol. 8. p. 54. Par. 1688.]

† 1 Tim. iv. 13.

‡ Καὶ ὑμεῖς εἰ θέλετε μετὰ προθυμίας προσέχειν τῇ ἀναγνώσει, οὐδενὸς ἑτέρου δεήθεσθε· ἀψευδὴς γὰρ ὁ τοῦ χριστοῦ λόγος, &c. Chrys. Proœm. in Epist. ad Rom. [vol. 9. p. 425. Par. 1731.]

not deceive us, which says, Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." He thinks this enough, and he grounds his opinion upon the promise of our Saviour. And indeed this is so universally confessed to be absolutely necessary to the finding out the sense of any author whatsoever, that the Romanists must be allowed the sole glory of that wonderful invention of teaching the people the true interpretation of the Scripture by forbidding them to read it.

2. But we who do not only allow but earnestly recommend the reading of it, should, when we read, seriously consider the main scope and design of the text; what connection the words may have with what goes before, and with what follows; by whom and to whom they were spoken; at what time, and upon what occasion; with any other material circumstances that may fall under our observation, which will often prove the best key to let us into the true sense of the place. But that we may at least avoid all dangerous errors in the interpretation of any part of the holy Scripture, we should be constantly mindful of the great intent for which it was written; which was certainly no other but the promoting of real piety, or the love of God and our neighbour; as St. Austin* shews at large. And "therefore," says he, "whoever thinks he understands the holy Scriptures, or any part of them, in such a sense as does not promote this twofold love of God and our neighbour, he does not yet understand them. But whoever shall from thence gather such a sense as is useful to the promoting of that love, and yet should not speak the sense of the author in that place;" in this case, "he is not in a pernicious error, but only in such an one as a man would be that should through mistake leave the road, and yet go on to the same place the road leads to by crossing a field." Such mistakes as these are very innocent, and no way prejudicial to our salvation: for though we may happen to misapprehend some passages we would ground it upon, yet our opinion in itself is pious and true. And it is certain what the same author tells us in another

* Quisquis igitur Scripturas divinas, vel quamlibet earum partem, intellexisse sibi videtur, ita ut eo intellectu non ædificet istam genuinam charitatem Dei, et proximi, nondum intellexit. Quisquis verò talem inde sententiam duxerit, ut huic ædificandæ charitati sit utilis, non tamen hoc dixerit, quod ille quem legit eo loco sensisse probatur, non perniciose fallitur — ita fallitur ac si quisquam errore deserens viam, eo tamen per agrum pergat quo via illa perducit. Aug. de Doct. Chris. l. 1. c. 36. [vol. 3. par. 2. p. 17. Par. 1670.]

place, that* “when there may be not one but two or more senses gathered out of the same words of Scripture, though it be not known what was the sense of him that wrote, there is nothing of danger if it can be proved out of other places of the holy Scriptures that every one of those senses is agreeable to the truth.” So that as the considering the scope of them will lead us into the meaning of many particular texts; so the having the main intent of the Scriptures always in our eye may preserve us from being dangerously mistaken in any.

3. After this we should carefully compare several places, and expound the more difficult by those that are plain and express. For, as St. Basil observes,† “Those things that seem to be ambiguous and obscurely spoken in some places of the holy Scripture, are explained by those that are confessed to be clear in other places.” St. Austin is perfectly of the same mind; and tells us,‡ “that the Scripture contains the things in those places that may be readily understood, which it does in the most abstruse:”§ that “there is nothing almost to be gotten out of the obscure passages which may not be found most clearly delivered elsewhere.” And therefore he frequently lays down such directions as these:|| “that examples should be chosen from the more plain and manifest, for the illustration of the more obscure forms of speech; and some testimonies, the meaning of which is certain, that may take away our doubting concerning the uncertain.” This he thinks so necessary,¶ “that if there were not plain and clear places to be found in the holy Scriptures, there would be no means left by which we could possibly open and illustrate

* Quando ex eisdem Scripturæ verbis, non unum aliquid sed duo vel plura sentiuntur, etiamsi latet quid senserit ille qui scripserit, nihil periculi est, si quodlibet eorum congruere veritati ex aliis locis sanctarum scripturarum doceri potest. Aug. de Doct. Christ. lib. 3. c. 27. [Ibid. p. 55.]

† Τὰ ἀμφίβολα καὶ ἐπικαλυμμένως εἰρησθαι δοκοῦντα ἐν τισι τόποις τῆς θεοπνεύστου γραφῆς, ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν ἄλλοις τόποις ὁμολογουμένων σαφηνίζεται. Basil. Reg. Brev. Resp. ad Interrog. 267. [vol. 2. p. 723. Par 1839.]

‡ Scriptura hoc in promptis, quod in reconditis habens. Aug. ad Volus. Ep. 3. [vol. 2. p. 409. Par. 1679.]

§ Nihil ferè ex illis obscuritatibus eruitur, quod non planissimè dictum alibi reperiatur. Aug. de Doct. Christ. lib. 2. c. 6. [vol. 3. par. 2. p. 22. Par. 1670.]

|| Ad obscuriores locutiones illustrandas, de manifestioribus sumantur exempla, &c. Ib. c. 9. [p. 24.]

¶ Aperta et manifesta eligamus. Quæ si in sanctis scripturis non invenirentur, nullo modo esset unde operirentur clausa, et illustrarentur obscura. Aug. de Unit. Eccl. c. 6.

the obscure ones." He accounts it the only way to interpret Scripture by Scripture ; and expound the difficult passages by those that are plain and easy. I might transcribe a great deal more out of the same author to the same effect ; but this I have purposely set down in his own words, as an instance of our agreement with the ancient writers of the Church in this case as well as others that are in dispute ; and to shew that the Romanists that are continually making their loud brags of the authority of the Fathers, are the men that do the most contradict them.

4. Another help for the better understanding the Scriptures, is the distinguishing betwixt proper and figurative expressions. If this be not carefully observed, it may quickly betray us into many gross and ridiculous errors. And here the most general rule is, that where the literal is manifestly absurd or impious, there the words are always to be taken in a figurative sense. Of this St. Austin (whom I have had occasion frequently to mention, especially his Books *de Doctrina Christiana*, where he treats designedly of the interpretation of Scripture), gives us a very unfortunate instance for the Church of Rome.* "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. This," says he, "seems to enjoin a very wicked and heinous thing. Therefore it is a figure commanding us to communicate of the passion of the Lord, and with delight and profit to lay up in our memory, that his flesh was crucified and wounded for us." He looks upon it as a horrible and flagitious crime, as indeed it was, "to eat the flesh, and drink the blood" of our Saviour in a literal sense. We see how far he was from thinking that the elements in the Lord's Supper did undergo any transubstantiating change. And they that will not be persuaded by this and many other reasons that the words are to be understood figuratively, are perfectly beyond the power of conviction. And if others were resolved to be as obstinate as they, it were impossible to confute the most monstrous opinion. It might be easily maintained that our Saviour was a material door, or a vine ; that St. Peter was a rook of stone ; and his successor, by consequence, could be no better. The Anthropomorphites would be the best dis-

* John vi. 53. Nisi manducaveritis, &c. Facinus aut flagitium videtur jubere. Figura est ergo, præcipiens passioni Dominicæ esse communicandum, et suaviter atque utiliter recondendum in memoriâ, quod pro nobis caro ejus crucifixa et vulnerata sit. Aug. de Doct. Christ. l. 3. c. 16. [vol. 3. par. 1. p. 51.]

putants in the world, and prove demonstratively, that Almighty God had hands and arms, eyes and ears, properly so called; that he was exactly of human shape; and that the Divine image consisted in this external resemblance. If no absurdities can force men to depart from the literal sense when they are pleased to be stiff; if others should take the same liberty, there would be no way of reducing such heretics but by throwing good store of anathemas among them, as they are wont to do that have nothing else to plead for themselves; they may have some hopes to confute their adversaries with curses, but never by argument.

5. If when we have observed such rules as these, there should yet remain any difficulties unresolved, the best way that is left to clear them, will be to consult with the learned and judicious; those whose chief study and employment it is, to inquire into the true sense of the holy Scriptures. By this means many intricate and dubious places may be quickly explained, which might otherwise seem inexplicable. As it is commonly practised in other cases: whatever kind of knowledge it be that men desire to gain, that they may the more easily attain it, and in the greater perfection, they are wont to advise with the most expert masters in their several professions. To these those that have opportunity may add many other helps; such as skill in the original languages; examining the most authentic translations, both ancient and modern; acquainting themselves with Jewish and Christian antiquities; getting some insight into ecclesiastical history, Fathers, Councils, and the best authors of later times, that have written either purposely or occasionally on this subject. We exclude nothing that may be any way serviceable to the right understanding of the text. After all, there may remain some chronological accounts, some prophetical predictions, and other obscure passages, which we may not be able fully to unfold, by these or any other methods.

III. But as to all necessary points, we may be as unquestionably assured of the true sense of Scripture, thus interpreted, as it is possible for any man to be of the sense of any other writing in the world. For if the Scripture be so plain, as I have shewed, in all things necessary to salvation, that it may be understood by any man of an ordinary capacity, then if we come to it with a mind rightly disposed, willing to learn and to do our duty; and make use of such helps as I have named; we may certainly be sure that we do so far understand it; or else we can never be sure that we understand anything.

Suppose the question should be concerning Livy's History, or Tully's Offices ; and a man should read these very diligently, observe their main scope and design, consider their style and phrase, and where he met with any difficulty, in such case advise with the most learned and skilful grammarians ; upon this he might be sufficiently assured that he understood the mind of his authors, at least in the most clear and perspicuous passages. And he would be judged very troublesome and impertinent, that should tell him that all his pains were to little purpose, he could never be certain but that he might be mistaken, for want of the direction of an infallible guide. There may indeed be some places in these and other writers, where the best critics may not be able to discover the true sense ; but it were an intolerable vanity in any man to argue, that therefore they must never trust their own judgments. Some things in Livy may be liable to dispute ; and yet he may make a clear relation, how Manlius defended the Capitol against the Gauls, with great bravery ; and how Camillus relieved him, and routed the enemy, just as he was about surrendering the place into their hands. That book of Tully's, which I mentioned, may have some obscurities in it, and yet I may be sure enough that he declares plainly against all manner of fraud and injustice, lying and equivocation, and other crimes, which have been more favourably dealt with, by some later casuists. Plain things will shew themselves by their own light ; and if a perverse man should attempt to persuade me they are obscure, when I sensibly perceive the contrary ; I shall no more believe him, than if he should tell me it were midnight, when I see the sun shining in my face. When his words are clear and express, the mind of an author may be easily known ; and I am sure very many, nay, all necessary things are as plain in the Scripture as words can make them ; and therefore there can be no reason imaginable why they should not be altogether as intelligible as any writings of human invention. When I find the worship of images expressly forbidden ; I must needs think that prostration and veneration that is paid them in the Church of Rome to be utterly unlawful ; and that I can never honour God by falling on my knees to the statue of a saint. When I read our Saviour's command, "Drink ye all of this," I cannot be reconciled to the decree of the Council of Constance, that takes away the cup from the laity, with a *non obstante* to his positive institution. When I see the Apostle arguing the matter at large,

and determining at last, that "Christ was once offered ;"* I can by no means understand, how he can be offered again, in ten thousand places every day, in the sacrifice of the mass. All the cavilling and sophistry that can be used, is not enough to incline me to believe, against the express words of holy Scripture. And it is this that makes the Romanists stickle so zealously for the necessity of an infallible interpreter ; not to explain what is obscure, but to darken or elude that which is plain. To this purpose they are forced to set up such a one, as may overawe men's judgments, and make them distrust, or if need be, deny the truth of their own faculties, and submit blindly to his authority. But this interpreter, whoever he be, if he give a sense that contradicts the letter of the sacred text, as all the pretenders have often done, it is a clear demonstration that he is not infallible. And yet this idle boast of infallibility, is the only thing by which they create a vain confidence in their own party ; and strive to amuse the minds of the weaker sort of the other side ; as if because they confess themselves to be subject to be mistaken, they could never be certain of anything. If this supposition were true, no man could have any certainty, but only the infallible person himself. If it be the Pope on whom they think fit to confer this wonderful privilege ; he must enjoy the benefit of it alone, and all the rest of that communion must be left as dubious and uncertain, as they imagine us to be. If they please rather to bestow this honour upon the General Council, as most of late, in these parts, tell us they do ; the case will be the same, as to those that are not admitted into that assembly ; and they that are, can be privileged only during their session ; as soon as ever they are dissolved, they immediately become as liable to errors as other mortals ; and so in all the longest intervals of Councils, there is no guide nor interpreter that can be depended upon ; nothing left to support their assurance, but a strange chimera of an infallible Church, without one infallible person in it. So that this conceit, instead of being the only way of giving men any certainty in their religion, as has been vainly pretended, will be found to prove the direct road, that leads them unavoidably into perfect scepticism. But if they say, as they do, that in all matters of revelation, such as the Scripture is, our assent must be always grounded upon testimony ; and therefore it can

* Heb. ix. 28.

never be firm and certain, unless the truth be delivered to us by one on whose authority we may securely depend ; that is, one that cannot be deceived himself, and we are sure will not deceive us. This is very true indeed : but then we have great reason to believe, that there is no such judge nor interpreter to be found upon earth. If they think there be, let them shew us his commission ; and agree among themselves, who it is ; and then the matter may deserve to be further considered. In the mean time we are very well assured, that our assent being built upon the word of God, stands upon a foundation that can never be shaken. The divine testimony is that which must give us the most absolute and undoubted uncertainty. And where that speaks plainly, as I have shewed it does, in all necessities ; there will be no need of an interpreter. For what is plain already, may be understood, without being still further explained. If it cannot, then their pretended infallible interpreter will want another to interpret him, and that another a third, and so on *in infinitum* ; which is a known absurdity, that will always leave them doubtful and unresolved in every thing. But we that ground our belief immediately upon the word of God, do rest upon that which is truly infallible ; and which speaks so clearly, that we may be as certain of the sense of it, as of any other writing whatsoever ; and if this be not certainty enough, there can be no such thing as certainty in the world.

And now that I have proved that the holy Scripture is so plain, that it may be rightly and certainly understood, by the help of such means as Protestants are wont to make use of, all the absurd and ridiculous consequences, which Mr. P. and Isaac, and such as they, would persuade us do follow from the Protestant rule of faith, will be of no force.

1. It does not follow, that whatever any man of sound judgment says is the sense of Scripture, ought therefore to be called the doctrine of the Reformation. They that hold the doctrine of probability, that men may act with a safe conscience upon the opinion of one doctor, may be justly charged with this, or something extremely like it. But all that are of the Reformation declare unanimously, that all men are subject to error ; and that they do not think themselves bound to submit to any man's judgment, or interpretation of Scripture, any farther than it can be proved to be the true and genuine sense of the text. We have a great deal more reason to affirm, than whatever has been taught by any of their most

ignorant and illiterate Popes, is therefore the doctrine of the Church of Rome. This cannot be denied by those that suppose them to be infallible, as very many still do ; and yet they are grown very shy of late, and seem mighty unwilling to grant it. But let them clear themselves as well as they can ; we are not enslaved to any man's judgment. There is nothing that can command our assent in matters of faith, but what is agreeable to the plain sense of the word of God.

2. It does not follow, that we may change religions as often as we please. For we that ground our religion upon plain and evident places of Scripture, as long as we continue true to this principle, cannot change our religion, unless the Scriptures themselves could be changed ; which would be a great convenience indeed to the Church of Rome. For till that be done, the heretics will be furnished with shrewd objections against all her peculiar, and most beloved doctrines. Purgatory, indulgences, and masses for the dead, with a great many more of the same stamp, must run an apparent hazard of being utterly lost. And therefore, to prevent so great a mischief, she has done whatever lay in her power to effect such a change ; by voting the vulgar Latin to be authentic,* in opposition to all other translations, and the original itself ; and by making unwritten traditions of equal authority with the written word. And as to their religion, we are sure they have changed it from what it was in the Apostles' days ; and for several ages after that. They have been continually changing, till the greatest change was brought in by the Council of Trent ; which made many things necessary to be believed, which had never been determined before. Since that the Bishop of Meaux, and some others, have introduced another change ; and endeavoured to refine some of the grosser errors of Popery, and make them look as near as was possible, like the Protestant opinions ; and, it may be, when they shall find it expedient for their cause, they will pluck off their disguise, and let them appear in their native colours again. Our rule is fixed, and we cannot vary from it : but they that make their faith to depend upon Popes and Councils, may alter often, and do not know what kind of religion may be made for them when such an assembly shall meet next.

3. It does not follow, that the allowing private persons to understand, or interpret Scripture, is an inlet to all heresy ;

* Concil. Trid. Sess. 4. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 747. Lut. Par. 1672.]

much less to Turcism, Judaism, Paganism, and Atheism itself. For the Scripture, as has been proved, is so plain in all things necessary, that it may be understood by men of ordinary capacities. And then it will seem exceeding strange, that that which was appointed, and so admirably fitted by God himself, for the instructing and guiding us in the way of salvation, should be made the great pretended occasion of leading us into the most profane and damnable errors. It is certainly the ignorance of the Scriptures, that is the true cause of all such mistakes. So our blessed Saviour told the Sadducees, in the great article of the resurrection,* “ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” And how well they that are always boasting of their infallibility, and endeavouring by all the devices imaginable, to fright the people from reading the Scriptures, have preserved themselves from those inconveniences they would charge upon us, is notorious enough to all the world. The worship they give the Virgin Mary, is not inferior to that which was paid her by the Collyridians; and therefore if it were only for this, I do not see how they can escape the imputation of heresy. For Turcism, I will not inquire what near approaches they make unto it; but I am sure they have a wonderful confidence in their Popes, and other guides, that do not appear to have been divinely inspired, any more than Mahomet. Judaism they exceed in the number and obscurity of their ceremonies; and their whole religion is nothing else but a strange medley of Paganism and Christianity. A learned man of their own communion, has observed long since, that† many, in his time, did worship the saints no otherwise than they did God himself; and that he did not see what difference there was in many things, betwixt the opinion they had of the saints, and that which the Gentiles thought of their gods. What progress they have made in Atheism, I leave to be determined by those travellers, that have taken the exactest view of Rome and Italy, and other places where Popery has not been ashamed to shew itself in its own proper dress.

Thus all the absurdities they strive to fix upon us, might be easily turned upon themselves. But there cannot be any of those ill consequences drawn from our opinion, who make Scripture, rightly understood, the only rule and measure of our faith.

I come now to consider the Popish way of interpreting Scrip-

* Matth. xxii. 29. † Lud. Vives in August. de Civ. Dei, lib. 8. c. 27.

ture; and what is their rule of faith. Isaac tells us,* that it is Scripture as interpreted by the Pope and Council, or their Church. But he is as much mistaken in their own rule, as he was in ours. For they do not esteem Scripture† alone to be the adequate rule of faith, but think that part of it is contained in unwritten traditions. And then for the interpretation of Scripture, he is deficient again; for he takes no notice of the‡ unanimous consent of the Fathers; against which the Council of Trent forbids any interpretation to be made. And Pius IV. goes something further;§ and commands the whole clergy and all regulars, of what order soever, to take a formal oath, that they will interpret the Scripture, not only not against, but according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. For what reason he did not think fit to make mention of this, I cannot tell; but we may see how far his credit is to be depended upon, that has not only foully misrepresented his adversaries' opinion, but given a false and imperfect account of the known doctrine of his own Church. But I shall not take any farther advantage against him for this, whether it were an ignorant, or a wilful mistake. But when we hear not only these idle dialogue-makers, but far more considerable men of the same communion, perpetually vaunting of their sure way of interpreting Scripture, and treating the Protestants with so much contempt; a man could scarce imagine anything else, than that all the ancient Popes and Fathers, and Councils, were on their side; and that they were possessed of some infallible exposition on the whole Bible, that should presently put an end to all disputes, by giving us the undoubted sense of every controverted text. This indeed might have been reasonably expected after so much boasting as we have had about it. But it must needs be a very strange surprise, to find ourselves so miserably disappointed. For notwithstanding all their confidence and vain-glory, their Church, which would fain arrogate to itself the sole power of interpreting Scripture, has not been pleased to oblige the world with any authentic commentary on the word of God, in more than sixteen hundred years. There is not yet so much as one manuscript copy of such a writing to be found in any

* Page 22.

† Conc. Trid. Sess. 4. [Ut supra, p. 746.]

‡ Ibid. [p. 747.]

§ Nec eam (scripturam) unquam nisi juxta unanimem consensum patrum accipiam et interpretabor, Bull. Pii 4. super form. Juram. [Ibid. p. 945.]

corner of all the Vatican. If they have such an incomparable talent of infallibility, as they are wont to talk of, let their Popes and Councils consider what account they will give of it ; and how they can be able to justify themselves, that they have kept it so closely wrapped up in a napkin, for so many ages. This is certain, whoever have their authors, that have given us an infinite number of huge volumes of annotations, and commentaries on the Bible, have had but little benefit by it. They may brag sometimes of the interpretation of the Church, but they are glad at last to make the best they can of their own. They proceed in the same manner almost as we do, they apply themselves to the same studies, make use of the same helps, they have the same differences of opinion, the same uncertainty in some obscure and difficult places ; they have not the least advantage here, except their confidence, above the poor, despised, fallible heretics. They cannot but be sensible enough of this, and therefore I verily believe the wisest of them could be contented to part with that imaginary interpretation of Popes and Councils ; if it were not for the sake of the second Commandment, and some other passages, that look with a very ill aspect upon the modern Romanist, and are not to be outfaced by anything, but such Popes as Hildebrand, and such Councils as that of Trent. But I will briefly examine the matter, and shew,

I. That they have not any such interpretation as they pretend to.

II. That if they had, it would be as much exposed to their own objections as ours is.

I. That they have not any such interpretation as they pretend to, is very apparent, because they have not yet been able to produce it ; and it is well known, that the Scripture has never been interpreted by Popes and Councils, and such an unanimous consent of Fathers, as must be supposed, if they ever hope to support their cause by that authority. Besides, they themselves have impaired the credit of those testimonies they are wont to allege ; by their *Indices Expurgatorii*, and other practices. The Decretal Epistles of the first and best of their Popes, are all of them notorious forgeries. They made an early attempt to falsify the Council of Nice, in favour of the pretended jurisdiction of Rome, and were resolutely opposed, and shamefully detected by the African bishops ; of which the famous St. Austin was one. In prosecution of the same design, they did endeavour, but in the last age, to obtrude upon us, I

know not how many canons more, which they would have us believe were found somewhere in an ancient Arabic manuscript. Nay, they have gone farther, and ventured to give us the acts of some Councils, that never were; as that of Sinuessa in particular; where they make Marcellinus tell a wise tale, only to exempt the bishop of Rome from being judged by any power upon earth. As for the Fathers, they strive to suppress whatever they discover to make against them; of which we have a fresh instance in St. Chrysostom's Epistle to Cæsarius: they have published so many dubious, and suppositious writings, under their names; they have expunged, and inserted so many passages in those that are genuine, that we might have just exceptions against the witnesses they bring, if we were desirous to decline the trial. But notwithstanding all the fraudulent arts they have used, they have left us evidence enough still to condemn themselves. I shall therefore go on to what I undertook to prove, that they have no such interpretation, as they are wont to boast of.

1. Their Popes, some of them, have been accused and convicted of heresy; some of them have been men of loose and atheistical principles, as the most learned and ingenuous of their own authors have confessed; and those that have endeavoured it, have not been able to palliate their crimes. And I hope they will excuse us, if we do not think ourselves obliged to look upon these, as the soundest interpreters of the holy Scripture. But these, and all the rest put together, have not gone about to explain one quarter of the sacred text, at least in any of their books that are now extant. And what excellent expositors some of them have been, may be easily conjectured, from the admirable applications they have made of some certain places, which they have had occasion to produce, for the confirmation of no less a point than their own boundless and unaccountable authority. I shall seek no farther for instances, than the two celebrated Decretals, the one of Innocent III. the other of Boniface VIII. I will not take notice of *Pasce Oves*, which they both allege, and urge it to the very same purpose; and it is the place that is the most insisted on to this day, by the most zealous champions of the Papal greatness. But that which I take to be Innocent's* own peculiar discovery, is the unfolding the mystery of the two great lights, which he makes to signify the pontifical, and the regal power, and from hence

* Decretal. lib. 1. Tit. 38. c. 6.

he proves it undeniably, as every good Catholic would guess, that there is as much difference betwixt Popes and Emperors, as there is betwixt the sun and the moon. I omit the glosses upon this exposition, wherein they have endeavoured to find out the exact proportion the two powers bear the one to the other; of which they have made several calculations, according to the skill they had in astronomy. There is another that is sent us out of the same forge, it is on that of Jeremiah: * “See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down,” &c. He tells the Greek emperor, to whom he writes, † that “he might have understood the prerogative of the priesthood from that which was spoken, not by any one, but by God; not to a king, but a priest; not to one decended from the royal, but the sacerdotal line; to wit, from the priests that were in Anathoth:” and then he repeats the words that I have already recited, to shew the pre-eminence of the spiritual power above the temporal. Innocent, I believe, was the first that ever attempted to prove this from that place; but his interpretation was liked so well, that it has been taken up since by two of his successors. Boniface VIII. ‡ makes use of it for the carrying on the same design; and Pius V. grounds his declaratory sentence against Queen Elizabeth upon the same foundation. Here are no less than three Popes, if there be no more, that think they are invested, by virtue of these words, with such a power over nations and kingdoms as it is certain Jeremiah himself never had; which is as far from the mind of the holy prophet, as it was from him that inspired him. But Boniface § strengthens this argument out of the New Testament too, and will prove, that the inferior spiritual power is to be judged by the superior; but the supreme, which we must know he thought was himself, cannot be judged by any, but God alone. And how do we think does he make this out? Why the text is clear, the Apostle says, || “He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.” It will not be necessary to inquire particularly how consonant these senses are to the true meaning of the several texts; nor how agreeable to the ancient and their own best expositors. This little specimen I have given, may be sufficient to convince

* Jer. i. 10.

† Decr. ib.

‡ Extrav. l. 1. Tit. 8. c. 1. [p. 319. Col. Mun. 1670.] Bulla Pii 5. contr. Eliz.

§ Extrav. ib.

|| 1 Cor. ii. 15.

us, how far they had been to be trusted, if their Popes had interpreted the whole Bible at the same rate. But, it may be, they will now tell us, they do not so much regard the judgment of the Pope, unless it be in conjunction with a Council.

2. I shall therefore examine the interpretation of their Councils, and see whether we may expect better satisfaction from them. And before it can be reasonably required that we should give up our understandings to their determinations, there are a great many considerable questions to be resolved. What it is that makes Councils to be truly general? By whom they are to be called, and how confirmed? When we may be secured that they proceeded *conciliariter*? Whether they be *approbata*, or *reprobata*? Or *partim approbata*, and *partim reprobata*? And if so, what part of them we are to receive, and what we must reject? These and many more are but preliminary doubts; which yet it is necessary to have substantially decided before we can come to the merits of the cause. And suppose we were able to overcome them, and clear ourselves of these perplexities, which have always puzzled the greatest men in the Church of Rome; yet our condition would be much the same, as to the main point; we should be as far as ever still from the true understanding of the Scriptures, for all the help the Councils can afford us. For we know their Councils have hardly interpreted so much of their Popes. If all the places that have been expounded by all the Councils, those that we receive, and those that they would impose upon us, were laid together, they would scarce exceed the length of an ordinary chapter. Or if they should happen to be something more, they would all be but very little in comparison to the whole. And if we should grant that that little was always rightly interpreted, they might then think themselves sufficiently assured of so much as their Councils had already explained; but for all the rest of the Bible, they would make it in a manner perfectly useless. For by their own principle, they must be as ignorant, and uncertain of the true meaning of it, as they persuade themselves the Protestants are. But the truth is, they are not so much concerned to have the Scripture understood, as to possess the world with a strong opinion of the obscurity of it, and the great danger of misinterpretation. And when they have got men into the dark, and put them in a fright, they begin to practise upon their weakness, and affirm with the highest degree of confidence

imaginable, that their Church, whatever it be, and none besides, is certainly entrusted with the grand secret of interpreting Scripture, though it has not yet been pleased to use it. But when they have once riveted this conceit in the fancy of their admirers, it will be easy to lead them about blindfold into such errors as they could never be guilty of; if they were permitted to read the word of God, without a slavish fear of heresy and damnation upon their minds, which they are made to believe they must unavoidably incur, if they should happen to apprehend anything otherwise than their pretended infallible Church requires. This is in short the mystery of the business: they make a mighty noise with the name of General Councils, not because those Councils they call so have ever declared unto us the sense of the Scripture, but because, after the decree is passed, they would have all men obliged, under the severest penalties, to wrest the Scripture to the sense of the Councils. This is that they are wont to call interpreting.

3. Besides this there is another thing which they have always in their mouths, and that is, "the unanimous consent of the Fathers;" this they very confidently aver, makes for them, and according to this rule they are sworn to interpret the Scriptures as I have already intimated. Which lays the strictest obligation upon them, to be very diligent in reading the Fathers, and no less careful how they differ from them. How conscientiously they have acquitted themselves in both these respects it concerns them to consider. We know, that when the Fathers can be by no means drawn to their side, they can treat them with the same contempt they do those they esteem heretics. But, indeed, they cannot be ignorant that there is no such "consent of Fathers" as their oath supposes. This will appear beyond contradiction; if any one will but take the pains to consult and compare any of their writings almost that are still extant. Those that have not leisure, or abilities for this, may be easily satisfied if they do but look into Cornelius à Lapide, or any Popish commentator, that sometimes gives us the interpretation of the several Fathers. They shall find them to agree in all articles of necessary belief; but in the particular explication of very many texts, they will meet with so great a variety of opinions, that it is a wonder how the Church of Rome can have the confidence to talk of such a thing as "an unanimous consent." There is a known difference that happened between two of the greatest and most

learned of all the Fathers of the Latin Church, which might be enough alone to put an end to this dispute. St. Jerome,* in his comment on the Epistle to the Galatians, had affirmed, that when "St. Paul withstood Peter to the face," it was but a kind of feigned reprehension; for that, as he thought, St. Peter was not really "to be blamed." St. Austin opposes this very zealously. And the controversy was managed betwixt them for a considerable time with a more than ordinary degree of heat, and for aught appears, they both persisted in their different sentiments to the very last. Besides this manifest disagreement, there are many things to our present purpose, which might be observed from their manner of handling the whole debate. St. Jerome† reckons up a great number of authors, some heretics among the rest, that expounded the place as he did. And says, he did not peremptorily define, but only recite what he had read; that he might leave it to the judgment of his reader, whether it were to be approved or rejected. Which shews the great diversity of opinion there then was; and that every man was left at liberty to choose that which he thought the best. He likewise mentions St. Austin's‡ differing from the most famous interpreters in his explanation of the Psalms. St. Austin§ answers, that he had read none of his interpreters; but if he had been a man of much reading, he thinks he might have produced as many that might have been of his persuasion. However, he appeals from them all to the Apostle himself; and declares plainly, that he will submit to no authority, but only that of the canonical Scriptures. And he tells us in another place, "that if the Catholic bishops,"|| the greatest Fathers of the Church, "should chance to be so mistaken, that they should entertain any opinion that was contrary to God's canonical Scriptures, we must not consent unto them." He admitted of no interpretation that did not agree with the plain sense of the text: he had regard to the truth, and not to the persons of men. In this very case of interpreting Scripture, he commends the

* Hieron. in Gal. c. 2. [vol. 7. p. 407. Veron. 1737.]

† Hieron. apud Aug. Epist. 11. [Ep. 75. vol. 2. p. 169, &c. Par. 1679.]

‡ Ibid. et Ep. 14. [Ep. 72. p. 163.]

§ Epist. 19. [Ep. 82. p. 189, &c.]

|| Nec Catholicis Episcopis consentiendum est, sicubi forte falluntur, ut contra Canonicas Dei Scripturas aliquid sentiant. Aug. de Unit. Eccl. cap. 10.

rules of Tychonius* the Donatist, and abridges and inserts them into the work he was writing on that argument. And when he had somewhere expounded a certain place,† according to St. Cyprian's, and his own present judgment, finding afterwards that this Tychonius had given a more probable sense, he approves of it, and makes no scruple to prefer the schismatic's interpretation before the martyr's. Which he had never done, if he had attributed so much to the authority of the Fathers as the modern Romanists pretend they do. Yet after all, wherever they can shew such a "consent of Fathers" as they talk of, we are contented readily to submit unto it, because we look upon them as the best witnesses of what was the received doctrine in their time. But then they of Rome can make no advantage of this: for it has been often proved, and they can scarce deny it, that in the explication of those places they are wont to bring for the supremacy and infallibility of their Church, and the other controverted points, the "unanimous consent of the Fathers" is clearly against them.

But since their "rule of faith is Scripture interpreted by Popes, and Councils, and the unanimous consent of the Fathers," it being well known that the Scripture hath never been so interpreted; then instead of the most certain, which they vainly boast of, it is manifest that they have no "rule of faith" at all.

II. But if we should suppose that they had such a rule, as they confidently pretend they have, it would be as much exposed to their own objections as ours is. Suppose the Popes and Councils had set themselves studiously about this great and important work, and given us an authentic exposition of all the Scripture; and suppose there were that perfect agreement among all the Fathers and ancient writers of the Church which they think requisite to give us the true and undoubted sense of all the obscure passages in the whole Bible: yet we should meet with the same difficulties here, which they pretend our opinion is liable to. For how could we be sure that we should be able to understand this exposition, whatever it were, any better than we may the Scriptures themselves? Why may not God express his own mind as much to our capacities as any man, or assembly of men? Or if we should allow that it

* Aug. de Doct. Christ. lib. 3. [Ibid. vol. 3. par. 1. p. 57. &c.]

† Id. Retract. lib. 2. c. 18. [Ibid. vol. 1. p. 48.]

was the Spirit of God that spake unto us by those men, or those assemblies, whose judgment they would have us follow, how can we be assured that the Spirit speaks more intelligibly in a Pope, a Father, or a Council, than it does in the Scripture? It is beyond all doubt that it does not. For though they pretend high, that this is the most effectual way to silence all disputes, and make the whole Christian world of one mind, yet it is apparent, that the number of controversies has been rather increased than abated by it. The determinations of Councils, which are accounted the greatest authority, have been so far from putting an end to doubtful and vexatious questions, that instead of that, they have been the occasion of new debates; and whereas there have been some differences about the interpretation of Scripture, there have been others concerning the interpretation of Councils. The Council of Trent was that wherein the Church of Rome shewed all the artifice and cunning that could be possibly used; and yet some of the most eminent divines of that communion, that were present at it, and had a great hand in drawing up the canons and decrees that were there made, have afterwards differed in their judgments about them, each one expounding them in favour of his own private opinion: and many such disputes there are among the Romanists themselves to this very day. Now when any such happens to arise, whither must we repair to have the doubt resolved? If to the Pope, it is not easy to have access unto him; and if that were done, many of his own sons do not think his judgment in the case to be sufficient. If then we must make application to the Council, there is none sitting; and unless the face of things should be mightily altered, many ages may be passed before we are like to see another. Or if one should chance to be called sooner, if it should proceed with the same Catholic gravity that the last did, it will be near twenty years before they will bring things to an issue: too long by much to be held in suspense about a matter of faith. But if it were safe, and we could be contented to stay so long, what benefit should we have, at last, of all our patience? If we had the resolution of the Council, and the confirmation of the Pope, we might be still mistaken, as we had formerly been; and so on, without ever coming to an end. The whole matter, in short, may be brought to this point: if plain things can be understood, the Scripture may, because it has been proved to be plain; if they cannot, then Popes, and Fathers, and Councils, can be no more understood than the Scripture.

I see no other way they can possibly clear themselves of this difficulty, but by saying as they do, that an implicit belief is enough ; that is, a believing as the Church believes, though they cannot tell what that is. This is only believing by proxy, or rather a mere readiness to believe, if they knew what it was that they were to believe. A pretty device, to make the infallibility of the Church an excuse for the ignorance of the people ; but the surest way that they have left, never to be mistaken, is to be very careful to know nothing.

I have now shewed, that we may come to a right understanding of the Scriptures, in all things necessary, in that way which the Protestants use ; that the Papists have no such unquestionable interpretation as they would persuade us they have ; or granting they had, whatever they object against us would be of the same force against themselves ; whatever they say against our interpreting the Bible will hold as well against their interpreting their interpreter. But they know they have no such interpreter ; and the pains they have taken to extol the imaginary sense of the Church, and decry the private spirit, has been only to deter the people from reading the Scripture, or else from presuming to understand it, which, when all is done, will be found at last to have been the greatest security of the Popish cause.

THE TEXTS WHICH PAPISTS CITE OUT OF THE BIBLE,
FOR THE PROOF OF THEIR DOCTRINE CONCERNING
THE OBSCURITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, EX-
AMINED.

THAT the Romanists are much more concerned for the interests of their Church than for the credit of our common Christianity, doth too manifestly appear by not a few of their avowed doctrines, but by none more than that of the obscurity of the holy Scriptures. In order to their Church's advancement to the highest pitch of glory imaginable, it is the most fundamental of all the articles of their faith, that she is infallible. And that the holy Scriptures themselves may be subjected to her authority, they resolve their belief of them into it ultimately; they found their judgment of canonical books wholly thereon; and not content herewith, they make their Church the only judge of the true sense of Scripture, and do their utmost to persuade the world of its great obscurity, even in the most necessary points, that they may demonstrate the absolute necessity of an infallible judge, and consequently of relying on the judgment of the Church of Rome for the understanding of Scripture, there being no Church besides that dares to pretend to the miraculous gift of infallibility.

And Cardinal Bellarmine, in the first and second chapters of his Third Book of Disputations, sets himself to oppose the plainness and perspicuity of the Scripture, in order to this end, as appears by all the following chapters of this book. And this he doth,

First, By Scripture.

Secondly, By sayings of several Fathers.

Thirdly, By answering objections: all which he doth perfectly like himself, as he appears in his other controversies, though much unlike a man of so great a name.

He opposeth the Scripture's perspicuity by Scripture two ways:

First, By producing several texts, by which he pretends to prove the Scriptures to be obscure.

Secondly, By giving us instances for a specimen of the

Scripture's obscurity. And the chief business of this discourse is, to examine how serviceable the Cardinal's particular texts of Scripture are to this his design against the Scriptures in general; as also to take those into consideration which are urged by others of his party for the same purpose.

But it is necessary first to shew what Protestants believe touching the perspicuity of Scripture; and,

1. I shall not need to say, that we are far from thinking the Scripture to be throughout plain and easy to be understood; that there are no obscurities, or no very great obscurities, to be found therein.

2. We are as far from thinking that all persons are in a capacity of understanding all Scripture; but we know that, according to men's educations and parts, and other circumstances, they are capable of knowing the true meaning of more or less of it.

3. We acknowledge that there are not a few places of Scripture so obscure and difficult as that those who are furnished with the best, both natural and acquired, advantages for the understanding of Scripture, cannot be certain of their having attained to the true sense of them, And we know,

4. That a great part of Scripture is now very easy that was once as difficult; and that many things therein contained are now extremely difficult, which time will make as easy. For instance, many of the types and prophecies of the Old Testament which relate to the Messias, were, perhaps, till his coming, at least as to their chief intention, unintelligible to all who were not inspired for the understanding of them, that since his coming, are to us Christians as plain and perspicuous. And several predictions in the book of Daniel and the Apocalypse, which we see accomplished, are as plain to us as they were before obscure; and those that are to be accomplished, are now as obscure as they shall be plain. And it is evident that the types and prophecies were designed by Providence chiefly for the benefit of after ages, for their greater confirmation in the Christian faith, as they came to be fulfilled; and divers of them might probably be designed wholly for their benefit. But,

5. We are abundantly assured, that all things necessary to be rightly understood in order to our salvation are in the holy Scriptures delivered with great perspicuity. That the meaning of those words and phrases by which the essential points of Christianity (whether they be matters of practice or of mere

belief) are made known to us, is as plain as we can reasonably desire it should be. This is shewn in a late excellent treatise, entitled, "Search the Scriptures," &c.* to which I refer the reader. And if any of these points are in some places less clearly expressed, they are in others most clearly; as the Divinity of our Saviour, &c.

This we shall anon prove by Scripture; and in the mean time we affirm, that St. Paul's words to his son Timothy, 2 Epist. iii. 15, do plainly imply this concerning the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which will be acknowledged not to be so perspicuous as those of the New. He there tells him, that "from a child he had known the holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wise to salvation," &c.; which must, at least, be understood of all things necessary to salvation contained in them. And in saying that Timothy knew them from a child, is implied sure that he understood them, and not that he had only learnt, like a parrot, to prate Scripture. And in believing thus concerning the Scriptures, we believe with the ancient Fathers, particularly we believe with St. Austin, who hath this well known saying,† "Ea quæ manifeste posita sunt in sacris Scripturis, omnia continent quæ pertinent ad fidem, moresque vivendi." We believe with St. Chrysostom, who, Hom. 3. on the Second to the Thessalonians, saith, that "all things necessary are $\delta\eta\lambda\alpha$ manifest." Nay, we might shew that some of the Popish writers themselves have declared their belief herein to be the same with ours; particularly Thomas Aquinas saith,‡ that "the Scriptures were proposed to all, and in such a manner that the rudest people might understand them." By which he must mean, in things necessary, at least.

But whereas it is objected, that it is not plain in Scripture what points are necessary, and what not, we answer: that as to whatsoever is necessary *ratione medii*, as a means in itself necessary to qualify us for the pardon of our sins, and the enjoyment of God, our own reason can find it out in Scripture; and whatsoever is only necessary, *ratione præcepti*, by positive precepts, the Scripture plainly declares it so to be. But further, we are assured that it is necessary to salvation to believe the truth of all things contained in Scripture, in that

* From page 74 to 91.

† De Doct. Christ. l. 2. c. 9. [vol. 3. par. 1. p. 24. Par. 1680.]

‡ S. 1. Q. 1. A. 9.

sense which is therein meant ; and if, after a faithful search after the true sense, wherein it is disputable, we happen to be mistaken, this shall be no obstruction to our salvation. Of this several Scriptures, which we shall hereafter have occasion to cite, do give us unquestionable assurance.

And, therefore, we cannot but esteem it as an instance of most heinous ingratitude to Almighty God and our blessed Saviour ; as an intolerable affront to the grace of the Gospel, and an infinite injury to the souls of men, to persuade the world that the holy Scriptures are obscure in matters necessary, *i. e.* (as we said) in any of those points of faith or practice, which are either means in their own nature necessary to qualify us for that happiness which is brought to light by the Gospel, or are made necessary to the attainment thereof by express declarations in Scripture.

6. As to those matters revealed in Scripture, the knowing of which is only profitable, and of use to our greater growth and progress in virtue, or to our being the more serviceable to God in the world, or to the managing of ourselves with the best Christian prudence in particular cases and circumstances, we affirm that most of them also are very plainly delivered ; and if they are not in some places, they are in others, or may by evident consequence be inferred from what is plainly revealed, so that it will not cost us much pains to inform ourselves truly concerning them. But particular cases that may fall out are infinite, and consequently cannot be expressly determined in any writing ; and therefore it is unreasonable to expect to find them so in the holy Scriptures. Yet they contain such general rules, as by the use of our reason, and prayers to God for direction and good advice, we may either understand how to govern ourselves in such cases ; or if, after faithful endeavours in the use of the best means to know our duty, we are mistaken, we are sure, upon a general repentance of all our faults, known and unknown, of God's pardon. But yet,

7. We do not assert the Scriptures so plain in the most necessary points as to be incapable of being misunderstood and perverted to an ill sense : if we did, we should think citations out of the most primitive Fathers, and those Councils which best deserve to be called General, wholly needless for the clearing of these, both which we have a great esteem of, as excellent good witnesses, though not as judges. And we need no greater evidence for the Scriptures being capable of

being misunderstood in such points, than what the Roman Church hath given us. Nothing can be more plainly revealed, than what is in Scripture, against the worship of God by images, or by any other mediator besides Christ Jesus; against prayers in an unknown tongue; against Christ's being again properly sacrificed in his Supper; against denying the cup to the laity, and too many other particulars to be now mentioned. But we see that Church understands all those Scriptures which most expressly contradict the lawfulness of those practices in such a manner as to reconcile them to them. And what think we of that great bone of contention, the judge in controversies? Hath not St. Paul expressed himself with sufficient plainness in this point, 1 Thess. v. 21? where he enjoins it as a duty upon private Christians to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." And in 1 Cor. x. 15, where, after he had required them to "flee from idolatry," he immediately adds, "I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say?" Or else he makes the reason of their minds their judge as to what he was about to say about the Lord's Supper. But why should he do so, if the Church alone were to judge for them in all points of faith? Hath not St. John likewise expressed himself plainly enough in reference to the same matter, 1 John iv. 1, 2, where he puts private Christians upon "trying the spirits, whether they are of God, since many false prophets were gone out into the world?" Though we Protestants do believe, upon as great evidence as we can desire, that the Scriptures descend to the lowest capacities in expressing all those things which are of absolute necessity to be rightly apprehended, so that nothing more than honesty, and a sincere desire to know the truth, in order to obeying it, is necessary to the understanding of it; yet we no less believe, that such as are desirous of nothing less than the conforming of their lives to God's laws, and are acted by worldly, carnal interests, and base designs, may, through the just judgment of God upon them, be so blinded, as to misunderstand the most perspicuous texts in the Bible, and "wrest them to their own destruction;" and we have too great reason to fear that there have been innumerable examples of this nature.

8. Protestants, in affirming "all things necessary to salvation" to be perspicuously contained in Scripture, do mean all such things of which the Scripture is designed to be the instrument of conveyance to our understandings. It is of

absolute necessity to our salvation to believe the Scripture to be the word of God—that it was written by Divine inspiration ; but it is unreasonable to expect that this should be satisfactorily proved by Scripture, there being no more reason to believe this, merely because the Scripture tells us so of itself, than to believe any person to be inspired barely upon his own word. Our Saviour himself saith, “ If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true ;” *i. e.* “ If you had no other reason to believe me to be the Son of God, than that I affirm this of myself, you ought not to think me so.” Our meaning, therefore, is, that all Christians (and that name supposeth the believing of the Divine authority of the Scriptures) may find all things necessary to salvation delivered therein with great perspicuity.

These things being premised, it is the easiest thing to shew that the Cardinal and others have been most shamefully impertinent in their citations of Scripture for the proof of its obscurity, against the Protestant doctrine touching its perspicuity ; or for the proving it so obscure, as that we cannot be secure of rightly understanding it, so far as is necessary, without the assistance of an infallible judge. And now we come to speak,

First, To the several texts which are pretended to give testimony to the obscurity of Scripture.

The Cardinal begins with three verses of the 119th Psalm, which contain three petitions of the Psalmist, though two of them differ only in words, *viz.*

Verse 73 : “ Give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.”

Verse 18 : “ Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law ;” or, “ the wondrous things of thy law.”

Verse 135 : “ Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and teach me thy statutes.” But,

1. King David was a man after God’s own heart, and therefore must have understood all things necessary to his salvation before he indited this Psalm ; and, consequently, these petitions do not prove that the Scriptures of the Old Testament are obscure in such matters.

2. As to his praying that he might “ learn God’s commandments,” and that God would “ teach him his statutes,” his meaning must be either that he would so enlighten his mind, as that he might clearly discern the full comprehensive sense

of all his laws, in order to his doing what was most agreeable to his will in all cases and circumstances, whether as a man or king, and to his so much the more glorifying God in both these capacities, and in all his relations; or that God would enable him by his grace to put in practice whatsoever he knew to be his duty.

3. As to his praying that he might "behold the wondrous things of God's law," the plain sense of this petition is, either that he would help him more and more to discern, and be affected with, the infinite reasonableness and righteousness, and the admirable wisdom and goodness of his laws; or that he would give him a greater insight into those spiritual mysteries which the law of Moses abounded with. But not the least shadow of proof can be brought from these petitions for the obscurity of the Scriptures in general, and much less for their being so obscure as to require any other infallible interpreter besides God himself.

The Cardinal's second text is Luke xxiv. 27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." "Now," saith he, "the disciples of our Saviour knew the Hebrew phrases, being Hebrews, and were neither proud men nor unbelievers; and yet he interpreted the Scriptures to them, and therefore the Scriptures are obscure."

But at most, by his favour, it can only follow from hence, that those Scriptures which our Lord expounded to them at this time were so, *viz.* the things relating to himself in the law of Moses and in the prophets. And yet neither doth it follow that these were obscure, at least now he was come, and had suffered death, and was risen again; nay, our Saviour plainly intimates that they were far from being obscure now, seeing he upbraided them immediately before with folly and dulness of apprehension for not understanding them; *viz.* ver. 25, 26: "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" As if he should say, "Is not this most manifest from the prophecies concerning the Messias? And therefore, what egregious stupidity are you guilty of in not perceiving it?"

His third text is, Acts viii. 31: where the Ethiopian eunuch, reading in his chariot that place in Isaiah, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter," &c. And Philip asking him

whether he “understood what he read?” replied, “How can I, except some man should guide me?” But,

1. He doth not reply, “How can I, except I am guided by some infallible interpreter?”—whether a single person, or a Church. And his reply spake no more, than that he needed some Jew that understood the Prophets better than himself was in circumstances to do, to interpret this place to him. Who, though he was a proselyte, lived at too great a distance from Judea to be mightily skilled in the most obscure part of the Jew’s Bible. And,

2. Whereas Bellarmine here adds, to make as much as he could of this passage, that St. Jerome (in his Epistle to Paulinus, concerning the study of the Scriptures) saith, “That this Eunuch did diligently read the Scriptures, and was *sanctus, pius et humilis*, an holy, godly and humble man;” surely he understood all things that were necessary to salvation before Christ’s coming, while he was ignorant of the meaning of this place in Isaiah, if he were such an excellent person before this his meeting with St. Philip, as he would have us believe he was from St. Jerome.

His fourth (and last) text is, those words of St. Peter concerning St. Paul’s Epistles, *viz.* “In which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction,” 2 Pet. iii. 16. Where Bellarmine saith, “It ought to be observed, that St. Peter did not say that there were some things hard to be understood by the unlearned and unstable, as the heretics expound it, but that there were some things absolutely difficult.” Now it is not worth our while, to inquire whether any of his heretics do so expound it; but he must needs have been conscious to himself of a great untruth in saying this indefinitely of them. We acknowledge therefore that St. Peter doth by “some things hard to be understood” in St. Paul’s Epistles, mean hard absolutely, or in themselves: but what service will this do our Cardinal? Since,

1. St. Peter doth not say that his brother Paul’s Epistles (and much less that the Scriptures in general) are hard to be understood, but only “some things” in them. And two or three things are some things. And in saying only some things, is implied, that all the other things contained in those Epistles are not hard to be understood.

2. Had he said, that there were in them many things hard

to be understood, how doth it follow that any of those things are points necessary to salvation? Another Jesuit tells us, that it is "evident from this place, that damnable errors may be incurred by misinterpreting places hard to be understood, and so this hardness is found in points necessary to salvation; for in such only damnable errors can be incurred."* And it is granted, that from this place of Scripture it follows, "that damnable errors may be incurred by misrepresenting places hard to be understood;" but we shall not easily acknowledge it a good consequence from hence, that therefore, "hardness is found in points necessary to salvation." It is granted too, that in "such only damnable errors can be incurred;" but I deny that it follows from thence that they cannot be incurred but by "misinterpreting such hard places as contain points necessary to salvation." For it is most evident that they may be incurred by misinterpreting places which do not contain such points; and that though there be no hardness in them, but much more if there be. What hardness is there in those words in the second book of Samuel, "The Lord moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah," when compared with the same passage in the first of Chronicles? where we read that Satan provoked him hereunto. For it plainly appears by this place, that the meaning of that is, that God, in his wise providence, permitted Satan to tempt David. And how is it necessary to salvation, to know that David was ever tempted to number his people? Yet that text hath been so misinterpreted and wrested, as to speak God to be the author of sin. But what error is damnable, if this be not? Again, it is no very hard matter to know, that St. Paul, in saying that "we are justified by faith, without the works of the law," meant the works of the ceremonial law, and it is plain, that he did not account it absolutely necessary to salvation, to believe that Christians might not, together with the laws of the Gospel, observe still those of Moses; for such as held the contrary were esteemed by him as no worse then weak Christians, who were unacquainted with their Christian liberty. But there were libertines (and still are) who so misrepresented, or wrested; that and the like sayings, as from thence to infer, that Christians are disobliged from the moral law. And I hope this author (though a Jesuit) would acknowledge this doctrine to be a damnable error. And therefore I say, that places not containing points necessary to salvation, are as capable every whit of

* Mumford in his Catholic Scripturist, Edit. 2. p. 13.

being wrested to the proving of such errors, as those that do contain such points. Though, as hath been said, we do not deny, that points necessary to salvation, may in some places be so expressed, as to admit of some difficulty to know their true meaning; but then we utterly deny that those points are only to be met with in those places; but we affirm, that in other texts they are most clearly expressed. So that it is of no concernment to our salvation, whether we understand those or no, provided we do not so misunderstand them (which we cannot do but by notoriously wresting them) as to draw some damnable error from them. And whereas this author saith, immediately before those words that have now entertained us, that "that cannot be a sufficient rule to decide all necessary controversies, which in such controversies speaks not clearly, but is very hard to be understood, as the Scripture is; whence we see all controversies arise about the true meaning of such and such texts. So 2 Pet. iii. 16, in which (Epistles of St. Paul) are certain things hard to be understood," &c. In these words he begs the question, since he affirms so positively, that "the Scriptures are very hard to be understood in necessary controversies." But if they be (as we are positive that they are not, and shall fully prove it too before the conclusion of this discourse) where shall we find a sufficient rule for the deciding of them? or rather, such a judge (for that he would be at, but blunders in expressing it) as can make the Scriptures a rule more sufficient? If there be such a judge, we should be at a comfortable pass were Jesuits, or Papists our best directors to him. For except we could find in our hearts to put out our eyes, we should then be sooner reconciled to perfect scepticism, or rather downright infidelity, than be satisfied with their direction. And we too well know, that either of these would much less offend this author and his brethren, than our denying the authority of their judge of controversies. Mr. Chillingworth's Jesuit saith, "that without a living judge the Scripture will be no fitter to end controversies, than the law alone to end suits:" and his answer hereto deserves our transcribing; saith he, "If the law were plain and perfect, and men honest and desirous to understand aright, and obey it, he that saith it were not fit to end controversies, must either want understanding himself, or think the world wants it." Now the Scripture, we pretend, in things necessary, is plain and perfect, and men, we say, are obliged under pain of damnation, to seek the true sense of it, and not to wrest it to

their preconceived fancies. Such a law therefore to such men, cannot but be very fit to end all controversies necessary to be ended. For others that are not so, they will end when the world ends, and that is time enough.

But we have not yet done with that text of St. Peter. Therefore,

3. Neither doth he here say, that any things in St Paul's Epistles are too hard to be understood without an infallible interpreter. But he plainly intimates the contrary, in that he calls those unlearned and unstable, who wrested them to their own destruction. Though he doth not say, as Bellarmine falsely affirms we say he doth, that "some things are hard to be understood by unlearned and unstable men," yet he saith, that they are such men who wrest them to their own destruction; so that St. Peter doth not deny it to be possible for men of learning and stability of judgment, to understand these hard things.

4. St. Peter seems to limit those hard things to what St. Paul saith concerning the argument he was now upon. His words are—"Even as our brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written to you, as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood." So that without wresting, or using anything of art, they may be thus read: "Some things are hard to be understood in what our brother Paul speaks in his Epistles concerning these things." Now the things which St. Peter discoursed of before, related of the coming of Christ to judgment. But so long as we are assured that he will come; and that "every one shall be judged by him," as St. Paul speaks plainly enough in one of his Epistles, "according to the things done in the body whether they be good or bad," we may, without "endangering our souls," be ignorant of several circumstances relating to this his coming; though wicked men might pervert some passages about them to a pernicious and destructive sense. But yet after all,

5. It is not certain that these words, "in which are some things hard to be understood," do relate at all to St. Paul's manner of discoursing about the matters St. Peter treats here of, for they may relate only to the things of which he discourseth; as being in themselves hard to be understood, let them be expressed with never so great plainness. That which makes the doubt is, that it is in the original *ἐν οἷς*, which cannot relate to the feminine *ἐπιστολαῖς*, Epistles, but to *τούτων*,

these things ; though it is confessed, that ἐν αἵς is to be found in two or three manuscript copies.

These are all the texts of Scripture that are produced by the Cardinal ; and if he could have met with fuller evidence for the Scriptures' obscurity from any other texts, no question he would not have satisfied himself with these : especially since he doth not here treat of this argument by the bye ; but it is the whole business of this and the next chapter, to demonstrate the Scriptures to be so obscure, as that all may be convinced of the absolute necessity of that infallible judge, which is the subject (as I said) of all the succeeding chapters of this third book. And his citing such texts as these for such a purpose, is as pregnant an instance as well can be, to shew what little things great men make themselves, when they zealously engage in an indefensible cause.

But there are other texts pressed to serve this cause, by other of the Popish authors, which must next be considered ; and I need look but into one book for them, *viz.* "The Touchstone of the Reformed Gospel," lately reprinted, and (as the title page tells us) "made more correct." And I cannot think but that we have here all those Scriptures mustered together, which are brought in any other books to prove the obscurity of Scripture ; though one single one to the purpose would have signified much more than all of them.

To those of Bellarmine here are added no fewer than ten texts, besides two which I am not unwilling to think misquoted, as great care as was taken in the correction of this edition. Those are Apoc. i. 5 : "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful and true witness," &c. And Luke ii. 14 : "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men." I say I suspect a misquotation in these, except they think that our Saviour could not be a faithful and true, if he were a clear witness : and that he could not bring peace on earth, or express good will to men, unless he had brought with him an obscure Gospel. And as to the other ten, it will be but good manners to beg the reader's pardon for troubling him with more than the bare recital of them.

The first is, Apoc. v. 4 : "And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open the book, and to read the book, neither to look thereon ;" *viz.* in regard of its great obscurity. Now our author tells us, that "the angel, speaking of the book sealed with seven seals, wept much : " and adds, "a strange case to read in Scripture itself, that the book of Scripture

should be shut up with so many seals. But much more strange, that even in St. John's time none could be found, neither in heaven, nor in earth, able to open the same, nor to look thereon : which every apprentice, now-a-days, without any difficulty, will undertake to do." But,

1. Hath their infallible interpreter told them, that it is the angel that is here said to weep much? And shall we believe him, when it is as clear as the light that it is St. John that saith, "I wept much?"

2. Did their infallible judge of the sense of Scripture tell them, that "the book sealed with seven seals is the book of Scripture," *viz.* the Bible? If so, how dare their very bishops, or cardinals, or the Pope himself, to look thereon, and much more, to open it, and read therein, if he ever does? When even in St. John's time, "none could be found, neither in heaven, nor in earth, able to open the same, nor to look upon it." One would conclude from hence, that the Church of Rome hath been abundantly too liberal in the liberty she hath granted to read the Scriptures. But many of our apprentices can tell them, that these two are but slender instances of their being better enabled to understand the Scriptures than other folk, in regard to their infallible judge. But their mere mother wit doth infallibly assure them, that, as it was St. John that said, "I wept much," not the angel, so it is only that particular book of Scripture of which these words are a part, which is here spoken of, not the book of Scripture in general. We see by these instances, that it is not necessary that things should be hard to be understood to put them into a possibility of being wrested, or misunderstood by some sort of people. For here is as easy a text as any in the Bible, most shamefully wrested by one at least, who would take it very ill to be called unlearned. And so are abundance more, as easy as this, by him and his fellow Catholics.

3. Whereas these words speak the Apocalypse to be a very difficult book; whoever thought otherwise of it? Though a great part (as hath been already said) is now much plainer than it was when it was first written, *viz.* so much of it as is accomplished; and the rest will every age be plainer and plainer, *viz.* as it is accomplished. And in due time, we doubt not but the infallible interpreter and judge of controversies, will find little service done to his (or her) infallibility, by the fulfilling of the prophecies of this book.

4. I add, that it is far from being "necessary to our salvation,"

to understand so much of this book as is intelligible by us; the matters therein contained, which are not to be found in other books of Scripture, being only in the number of things, in higher or lower degrees, profitable, not absolutely necessary.

As to the following texts, our author is so civil to his readers, as only to cite the chapters and verses, and I would be as civil to mine too, were we not to deal with a sort of men whose humour it is to cry up the absurdest arguments and objections, as unanswerable, if they be not answered.

The second text is, 2 Pet. i. 20: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation." But,

1. It is not said "no Scripture," but "no prophecy of the Scripture;" or of the Old Testament, of which the Apostle is here speaking. But Protestants acknowledge, as well as Papists, that there is obscurity, and great obscurity too, in the prophecies. Though (as we have more than once said) there hath been much greater than is now, and they will be as perspicuous as ever they were obscure.

2. Whereas it is said, "that no prophecy is of any private interpretation," *ἰδίᾳς ἐπιλύσεως* is rendered by divers of our most learned expositors, "of the prophet's own starting," (*ἐπίλυσις* seeming to be an agonistical word, saith Dr. Hammond, signifying "the first setting out of racers,") or *proprii impetus*, or *instinctus*, "from the prophet's own motion or instinct," which come all to the same sense. And this is most probably the true version, and I doubt the infallible interpreter himself cannot furnish us with one more agreeable to the context, both immediately preceding and following these words. The words foregoing are, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed," &c. *viz.* because no prophecy is of the prophet's own motion; for (as the next verse after this text tells us) "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." But,

3. Suppose we keep to this version, "private interpretation," it cannot be conceived that the Apostle designed to assert such an obscurity in the prophecies of the Old Testament (and much less in the doctrines, precepts and promises of holy Scripture) as makes them not to be interpretable but by the Church representative, since private Christians were then inspired with the gift of interpreting those prophecies. St. Paul puts the Corinthian Christians in general "upon desiring

spiritual gifts, but rather that they might prophesy." And by prophesying, in this place, Erasmus and Estius, with too many others to be reckoned up, understand the gift of expounding difficult places of Scripture, but especially the prophecies: the true understanding of these, tending greatly to confirm the truth of Christianity. And therefore, well might the Apostle say, "but rather that ye may prophesy." So that I say, St. Peter could not mean, that no prophecy is explainable by any particular persons, since at that time, even private persons had the gift of explaining them.

4. It is worth our observing too, that St. Peter here commends the Christians in general for taking heed, and applying their minds to these prophecies. Which shews, that either they did understand them, or that they were not too obscure to be by care and diligence understood by them.

The third text is, Matt. xiii. 11, to which is joined the 36th. It is said in verse 11, in answer to this question of the disciples, "Why speakest thou to them in parables?" "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (*viz.* the rest of those that heard him) it is not given." And in the 36th verse it is said, "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." Now all that can be gathered from hence is,

1. That Christ spake the "mysteries of the kingdom in parables," because the multitude should not understand them. Which shews, that had he not spoken to them in parables, they might have understood them.

2. That he explained them to his disciples, that they might understand them. And, he having left his explanations on record, we are capable of understanding them as well as they. And therefore these two verses are so far from proving the obscurity of the Scriptures, that they prove the directly contrary.

The fourth text is, Luke xxiv. 45: "Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures." To which I reply,

1. That the foregoing verse sheweth, that by the Scriptures, for the understanding of which, it is said, the disciples' understandings were opened, were not meant the Scriptures in general, but only the prophecies concerning Christ contained in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets and Psalms of David; for that verse runs thus: "And he said unto them, These are

the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me."

2. That the disciples, having had their eyes opened for the understanding of these prophecies, not only enabled others, by word of mouth, after they were become Apostles, but all Christians to the end of the world, by their writings, to understand them.

The fifth text is, 1 Cor. xii. 10: "To another (is given by the Spirit) the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues." But what shall we find here? This place surely is designed to prove, not directly, the obscurity of the Scriptures, but that for the sake of which our adversaries are so zealous to have them obscure, *viz.* that Christ hath indued their Church with the "gift of prophecy," or of infallibly interpreting the Scriptures, and of "discerning of spirits," or discerning between true and false pretences to inspiration. But it is no impertinency to ask, what is this to the Church of Rome (or to any other Church since the Apostolical age), any more than the rest of this verse is, *viz.* "to another the working of miracles, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues." But that Church makes no pretence to the gift of "divers kinds of tongues," nor to that of the "interpretation of tongues," and we are abundantly satisfied that it would be infinitely more for her reputation among wise men, did she make no pretence neither to the "working of miracles;" and so are many of her sons too.

The sixth text is, Luke viii. 10: "And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." But this text is the same with the third as to the former half, and what service the other half will do this cause, I cannot divine. The sense of which (at least in part) is this: that our Lord having enemies among his hearers, who he knew watched for all advantages from his discourses, to do him a mischief, he would not, according to his own advice, "cast pearls before swine;" but kept himself out of harm's way, till the time came when he was to be delivered into their hands; and therefore chose to speak many things in parables, that "hearing they might hear," and not

perceive his meaning. But afterwards those things were spoken so plainly, that all that would might understand them. And I say, what is this to the purpose of proving the obscurity of Scripture? There is also joined with this verse the 54th of the same chapter; but if the figures be not mistaken, I leave it to the reader to make out a proof of the Scriptures' obscurity from this verse. The words are these: "And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise."

The seventh text is, 2 Tim. iii. 7: "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Good again! Because "silly women, laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts," and these silly and sinful women in the hands of more sinful seducers, and taken captive by them too, cannot come to the knowledge of the truth by all their learning, therefore the Scriptures are obscure. ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι.

The eighth is, 1 John iv. 6: "We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us; hereby know we the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error." Dr. Hammond's paraphrase upon these words (which I shall not mistrust till the Roman doctors, from their infallible judge, furnish me with a better) is this: "Our doctrine is the true pure doctrine of Christ, hath nothing of worldly greatness, or secular interest in it, but only of piety and purity, self-denial and contempt of the world, and every pious Christian hearkeneth to us: and this is a way of discerning true from false prophets. One is all for purity and confession of Christ, even in persecutions, the other for worldly advantages and self-preservation." And what greater evidence can we desire than here we find, as for the Scriptures being obscure, so for the Church of Rome's being gifted for the preserving of us from heresy (especially from the sixth century to this present time) above all Churches in Christendom?

The ninth is, John v. 35: "He was a burning and a shining light," &c. But how is the Church of Rome concerned in the Baptist's having been such a light? But perchance a certain argument called a *minori*, may be couched under this citation; which runs thus: "if Christ's forerunner was a burning and shining light, then his Vicar is much more so; for the enlightening of the dark Bible." But however this is, we have heard of such burning and shining lights as have scarce had their fellows, either since or before St. John the Baptist.

The tenth and (for our comfort) the last text is, Psalm

cxix. 34 : "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart." But what is this more than a second repetition of Bellarmine's citation, as to its sense, out of this Psalm, though a different verse ? But I have too much exercised my reader's patience to repeat my answer.

And now, if all these fourteen texts cannot convince us, that it is impossible for Protestants to understand the Scripture, we are like to persevere in our heretical notion of its perspicuity, in all necessary points especially, for all that texts of Scripture do say to the contrary : and still to think ourselves in no need of being assisted by Rome's infallibility in inquiries after the true sense of it. For certainly no mortal man can imagine any of those Scriptures pertinent to the purpose for which they are produced, but such as dare not look upon them with their own eyes, and believe themselves void of all judgment of discretion in matters of religion, because they are told so by the Church of Rome. But as for such as these, there is not a text from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Revelation, but may as well convince them of the obscurity of Scripture, if their Church shall be pleased to tell them that this her doctrine is proved by it. And therefore, to what end is it to fetch testimonies from Scripture to prove its obscurity, were it not, in pursuance of their Church's prohibiting them to look into a Bible, to affright them from reading any more of it, than such texts ? Which, it seems, are perspicuous enough to be understood both by Catholics and heretics, because they assure them that the Scriptures in general are not to be understood by them. And as for us heretics, who have no such deference for this Church's authority, it seems the idlest thing in nature, to go about to persuade us of the obscurity of the Scriptures, by testimonies taken out of them : for if they be so obscure as we are told, and themselves say they are, we shall not so much believe it because they tell us so, as because we find them so. As on the other hand, if they should tell us, that they are perspicuous, we could not believe it, if we found them to be obscure.

But this doctrine of the obscurity of Scripture in matters of faith necessary, is as great an imposition upon our experience, as is that of transubstantiation upon our senses. And therefore we do more than believe, we know, that it is an impious slander upon the holy Scriptures, and a blaspheming of the Author of them.

But since those who so much despise the Scriptures, as

Papists are well known to do, can quote texts out of them, to serve their own turn (as one whom I will not name long before them did, who had as little respect for them as they can have, and was far more cunning in his quotations, than we have now seen they are), we can furnish them with texts good store, that infinitely more clearly assert the perspicuity of the Scriptures than any one of theirs does its obscurity. And this we would do were it needful, as we have shewn it is not: but these four are enough for our adversaries to compare with their fourteen: *viz.* Deut. xxx. 11, &c.; 2 Cor. iv. 2, 3, 4; 1 Tim. vi. 3; John vii. 17.

Moses saith in Deut. xxx. 11, &c.: "This commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off; it is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee (or plainly before thine eyes) life and good, and death and evil." Bellarmine takes notice of this text among others, as urged by Protestants for a proof of the perspicuity of Scripture: and gives us this remark of Brentius upon it, *viz.* "These words shew, that there is no need of passing over the mountains, and going to Rome, for the interpretation of Scripture." And in his reply to it, of two answers he prefers this: "that Moses here speaks only of the precepts of the Decalogue, which are natural and easy to be understood." Fairly confessed! and we thank him. But lest this sense should seem to thwart this exposition of those verses he quoted out of the cxixth Psalm for the obscurity of the Scriptures, he saith, that "by the law, which David there confesseth was difficult to be understood (though, as we shewed, he confesseth no such thing), he did not mean the ten precepts only, but all the holy Scriptures." But if he did not mean those ten only, but all the holy Scriptures, he must needs surely mean them, though not them only; and therefore Bellarmine is more concerned to reconcile Moses and David (though if they had been at odds, he is far from doing it), than not to contradict himself. But since he here acknowledgeth the Ten Commandments to be so very plain, and easy to be understood, we shall make some earnings of this acknowledgment. For no less than nineteen parts in twenty of the

preceptive part of the New Testament, are but so many branches of the moral law, and therefore they must also be as plain and easy. And it is very pertinent to our purpose to observe, that St. Paul doth apply these same words of Moses to the precepts of the Gospel, Rom. x. 6, &c. : saying, "The righteousness of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven," &c. And verse 8, after the repetition of the 4th verse of that 30th of Deuteronomy, *viz.* "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thine heart," he adds, "That is the word of faith which we preach." And the same Apostle sums up all, that the "grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, teacheth, in living soberly, righteously and godly ;" or, in behaving ourselves, as becomes such creatures, towards our ownelves, our neighbour, and Almighty God : which surely are all duties enjoined by the moral law. And besides what is expressly commanded and forbid in the Ten Commandments, or is plainly deducible from them, and our Saviour's more perfect exposition of several of them, which he calls fulfilling, or filling up, the law ; there are but two or three more distinct precepts contained in the Gospel, *viz.* that of believing Christ to be the Saviour of the world, and Son of God (and consequently believing whatsoever he delivered, and confirmed by innumerable miracles, wonders and signs, to be true, whether we truly understand it or no), and faith in his undertakings for our deliverance both from the punishment and power of sin ; together with the institutions of Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; in none of which we have any reason given us to complain of obscurity. Though the Church of Rome hath been pleased to make the last of these, not only most difficult, but impossible to be understood ; and to be also not disbelieved by those who cannot digest the greatest contradictions in the world, both to their bodily senses, and the reason of their minds. Indeed the Quakers, from one of those instances of our Saviour's filling up the law, prove all swearing to be unlawful ; when it is evident enough by comparing this place with Hebrews vi. 16, and those three places in which St. Paul, upon most weighty occasions, swears, that only swearing by creatures, and all customary and unnecessary swearing is forbid. But though thus to understand those words, "Swear not at all," be necessary upon some other accounts, yet I presume none think it of absolute necessity to salvation : or, that, though customary and unnecessary swearing be a mortal sin, refusing

to swear at all from a no more culpable principle than a mere persuasion of our Saviour's having forbidden it, can be worse than a venial one. And as to the mighty motives our Saviour hath given us to the observation of his precepts : namely, his exceeding great and precious promises, and his fearful threatenings ; one would in charity hope that no Papist can for shame say, that these are so expressed, as that it is impossible, without an infallible interpreter, to know their true meaning.

In our second text, *viz.* 2 Cor. iv. 2, 3, 4, the Apostle saith, " We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty," or all mysteries of iniquity, that make godliness a mere matter of gain, and religion a state trick ; " not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully," by making additions of our own thereto (and oh, that their pretended only successors could say so too !), " but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, (and therefore, no doubt, speaking to all men's understandings). But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost ; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them ;" or, we have preached the Gospel so plainly, that if any do not understand it, they are only such as whose eyes are blinded by the devil, or the love of the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world. Bellarmine doth likewise take notice of this place, as brought by Protestants to prove the perspicuity of Scripture ; but his answer amounts to no more than this, that " the Apostle doth not here speak *de intelligentiâ Scripturarum, sed de cognitione, et fide in Christum* : concerning the understanding of the Scriptures, but the knowledge of Christ, and faith in him." As if the knowledge of Christ were not the knowledge of his Gospel, and faith in Christ did not imply the belief of his doctrine ; or such a belief thereof as produceth conformity to his precepts. And therefore, he might for shame have silently passed over this excellent testimony to the perspicuity of Scripture.

In our third text, *viz.* 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, it is said, " If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strifes of words," &c. Not he is merely weak, and therefore cannot understand the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, but he is proud, and puffed up with



a mighty opinion of his own knowledge, though he knows nothing; and he is contentious and wicked (as it follows), and therefore will not understand them. The Cardinal takes no notice of this text.

Nor of this following neither, which is our fourth and last, viz. John vii. 17, where our Lord saith, "If any man will do his will, εἰ θέλη ποιεῖν, be willing to do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God," &c. or, he shall know that it is of God; and therefore he shall undoubtedly understand the true sense of as much of it at least as is necessary; for else it will signify nothing to him to know whether it be of God, or no.

It is needless (as I said) to insist upon more texts to the same purpose, since whether any writing be obscure or plain, is not a question to be decided by testimony, but by experience. And all honest souls, who study the holy Scriptures with no worse design than to know the way to eternal bliss, that they may walk therein, do find themselves able to understand them in innumerable more particulars than what are barely necessary. And whatsoever Scriptures such cannot understand, or may be mistaken in their sense of them, they may be assured from those now quoted, and many more, that they are not of such necessity, as that they shall fall short of salvation, by reason of this their ignorance, or error. Nay, even those Scriptures which they cannot understand are profitable to them, as they are made more humble by a greater sense of their own weakness, occasioned by them. This Gregory the Great observed in his 17th Homily: saith he, "*Scriptura tota propter nos scripta est, sed non tota intelligitur a nobis*, &c.: the whole Scripture is written for our benefit, but it is not wholly understood by us. Many things indeed are so plainly delivered therein, that little children (in understanding) are nourished by them: other things are veiled under such obscure sentences, that strong men have their parts exercised by them; and they are the more grateful to them for their coming by labour and pains to the knowledge of them. But some things therein are so very obscure, that while we do not understand them, by acknowledging our own blindness, we are advanced in humility more than in knowledge."* I may add, that we are assured by the concern that the infinitely good God declares he hath for the souls of men, he must

* Vol. 1. p. 1282.

needs adapt his word to their capacities, so far as the true understanding thereof is necessary to their everlasting happiness. And it is an impeachment of his wisdom, as well as goodness, to think, that in a writing he hath sent to the world, of such infinite importance, he hath not expressed his mind so intelligibly as to answer his design therein.* Or, that all should be required by him to study that book, which is so above the reach of their understanding, as the Church of Rome would have it, and therefore keeps it from being translated into the vulgar language, where she is powerful enough to do it; and under severe penalties prohibits the vulgar so much as to be owners of a Bible. But that it is the duty of all persons to read the Scriptures, is as evident as anything can be from them. Which is shewn in two late treatises, to which I refer the reader.†

Secoudly : I am now come to the Cardinal's instances, which he gives us for a specimen of the obscurity of Scripture. But there needs no more to be said concerning these, than that himself must needs have seen how little they signify to his purpose.

He saith, that "in the Scriptures two things are to be considered, *Res quæ dicuntur*, and *Modus quo dicuntur*: the things there delivered, and the manner how they are delivered."

Under the former head he instanceth in the Trinity, the incarnation, and other of the greatest mysteries of our religion. Upon account of which, he saith, the Scripture is *obscurissima*, extremely obscure. But how can he make that out? I should think that no more therefore of the Scripture is obscure, than only those particular texts wherein those mysteries are contained. But as to the obscurity of the mysteries, it is such we must acknowledge as makes them incomprehensible, and not to be fathomed by our shallow capacities, but we shall never grant them to be unintelligible. Nor do any, I hope, think them so, who are satisfied to have no other notions of them than they find in Scripture; and do not trouble themselves with the conceits of wanton wits, and especially of the Schools about them. But what service can the infallible interpreter do us in the understanding of these mysteries? Can he

* Quid est autem Scriptura sacra, nisi quædam Epistola Omnipotentis Dei ad Creaturam suam Greg. Mag. Ep. 40. vol. 2. p. 626.

† Search the Scriptures, &c. The People's Right to read the Holy Scriptures asserted.

do us more than what he hath done his admirers? Who, for any discoveries of theirs the world hath hitherto met with of more light, we must conclude (except they keep their profound knowledge locked up within their own breasts) do as little understand them as ourselves. The book of nature is fuller of incomprehensible mysteries, than this of Scripture; and we have no cause to think, but that this interpreter will as soon make that book easier to us, as he will this. But concerning the mysteries hereof, we are satisfied we ought not to be ambitious of knowing more than that there are no contradictions in them to the reason of our minds, though they are much above it: as are also ten thousand things in nature, which yet is no discouragement to the study of natural philosophy. And so much knowledge as this comes to concerning the mysteries of our religion, we find by experience is easiest gained, by considering them only as the holy Scriptures have expressed them; and not endeavouring to be wise above what is there written.

And as to the obscure manner of expressing things in Scripture, he gives six instances hereof, and one or two examples under every head but the last. But what man of sense cannot discern at first sight, that all this is mere trifling; and only serves to shew that the Cardinal chooseth rather to play at small game than to lie out? We Protestants can furnish him with far more obscure Scriptures than any of these, and yet well know that there is not the least appearance of a contradiction in them to our doctrine concerning the perspicuity of Scripture. Nay farther, the Scriptures he cites under these heads, have nothing in them, that a man who is master of but one good commentator, will call obscurity.

And whereas he concludes his instances with that of the Scriptures abounding with figures; such as tropes, metaphors, allegories, hyperboles, ironies (and makes use of one of these figures in adding, *et alia id genus sine ullo numero*: “and other things of that kind innumerable”), one good system of rhetoric can as effectually clear these obscurities, as all those together who have had the honour of sitting in the infallible chair: who (bating their infallibility) could very rarely boast of one jot more learning than their neighbours. But it is somewhat strange that he who could find so many figures in the Bible, should not be able to espy one there where every apprentice among us can: and that he who can find a figure in those

words of our Saviour, "I am a door," and "I am a vine," should not perceive one in these words, "this is my body;" where all the world besides himself and his infallible Church will say, that those must have put out their eyes who cannot discern it.

But yet, after all that Bellarmine and other Popish authors have said of the obscurity of the Scriptures, and their making them a mere nose of wax, to be turned this way or that way as their Church pleaseth; and the scandalous insinuations against them, and sometimes broad invectives, which are found in their books, we must still believe (if we will take their own word for it) that they (good men) have no less a veneration for them than ourselves. And they must needs be aware how highly necessary it is, if it be possible, to make us think so. But I will answer them in the words of our learned Chillingworth,* with which I will conclude, *viz.* "This being once settled in the minds of men, that unwritten traditions, if proposed by the Church of Rome, were to be received with equal reverence to those that were written; and that the sense of Scripture is not that which seems to men's reason and understanding to be so, but that which she should declare to be so, seemeth it never so unreasonable and incongruous. The matter being once thus ordered, and the holy Scriptures being made in effect not your directors and judges (no farther than you please), but your servants and instruments, always pressed and in readiness to advance your designs; and disabled wholly with minds so qualified to prejudice or impeach them: it is safe for you to put a crown upon their head, and a reed in their hands, and to bow before them and cry, Hail, King of the Jews! To pretend a great deal of esteem and respect and reverence to them, as here you do. But to little purpose is verbal reverence, without entire submission and sincere obedience. And as our Saviour said of some, so the Scripture, could it speak, I believe would say to you: 'Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not that which I command you?' Cast away the vain and arrogant pretence of infallibility, which makes your errors incurable. Leave picturing of God, and worshipping him by pictures. Teach not for doctrines the commandments of men. Debar not the laity of the testament of Christ's blood," &c. And I add, acknowledge what one would think those of you that have read the Scriptures must

* Against Knot, part 1. chap. 2. p. 46.

needs see, *viz.* that they are far from being obscure in matters necessary; and whatsoever the Scriptures command you, do; and then we shall willingly give you such a testimony as you deserve; but till you do so, to talk of estimation, respect, and reverence to the Scripture, is nothing else but talk.

THE
WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF ROME
JUSTLY CONDEMNED.

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THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF ROME JUSTLY CONDEMNED.

BOOK I.

THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF ROME JUSTLY CONDEMNED AS AN IDOLATROUS WORSHIP;

OR

A SCRIPTURE PROOF OF THE UNLAWFULNESS OF GIVING
ANY RELIGIOUS WORSHIP TO ANY OTHER BEING BESIDES
THE ONE SUPREME GOD.

THE INTRODUCTION.

OF all the disputes between us and the Church of Rome, there is none of greater concernment than that about the Object of religious worship.

We affirm, as the Scripture has taught us, Matth. iv. 10, that we must "worship the Lord our God, and serve him only." The Church of Rome teaches, "that there is a degree of religious worship, which we may give to some excellent creatures, to angels and saints, and images, and the host, and to the relics of saints and martyrs." If they are in the right, we may be thought very rude and uncivil at least, in denying to pay that worship, which is due to such excellent creatures, and very injurious to ourselves in it, by losing the benefit of their prayers and patronage. If we be in the right, the Church of Rome is guilty of giving that worship to creatures which is due to God alone, which is acknowledged on all hands to be the greatest of sins; and therefore this is a dispute which can never be compromised, though we were never so desirous of an union and reconciliation with the Church of Rome; for the incommunicable glory of God, and the salvation of our souls, are too dear things to be given away in compliment to any Church.

And should it appear in the next world (for I believe it will never appear to be so in this) that we were mistaken, that we were over nice and curious in refusing to worship saints and

angels, yet ours is a much more innocent and pardonable mistake, than that which the Church of Rome is guilty of, if they should prove to be mistaken. We are only wanting in some religious courtship, which we might innocently have given to saints and angels, but which we were not bound to give (as the Church of Rome will not say that we are) by any express divine law; and therefore it is no sin against God not to do it; and when this neglect is not owing to any designed contempt and disregard of those excellent spirits, but to a reverence for God, and jealousy for his incommunicable glory, if it were a fault, we need not doubt but that God would pardon it, and that all good spirits, who have such a profound veneration for God, will easily excuse the neglect of some ceremonies to themselves upon so great a reason.

But if the Church of Rome be mistaken, and gives that worship to creatures which is due only to the supreme God, they have nothing to pretend in excuse of it; neither any positive law of God, which expressly forbids all creature worship (as I doubt not to prove, to the satisfaction of all impartial readers), nor the principles of natural reason; which, whatever apologies it may make for the worship of saints and angels, can never prove the necessity of it; and it highly concerns the Church of Rome, and all of her communion, to consider, whether if their distinctions and little appearances of reason cannot justify their worship of creatures, they will be able to excuse them from the guilt of so great a sin.

But not to insist on these things now; I shall divide this discourse into three parts.

1. I shall prove from the plain evidence of Scripture, that God alone is to be worshipped.

2. I shall examine what that worship is, which is proper and peculiar to the supreme God.

3. I shall consider those distinctions, whereby the Church of Rome justifies her worship of saints and angels, and images, &c.

SECT. I.

That God alone is to be worshipped.

To make good the first point, that we must worship no other being, but only God, I shall principally confine myself to Scripture evidence, which is the most certain authority to

determine this matter. For though I confess, it seems to me a self-evident and fundamental principle in natural religion, that we must worship none but that Supreme Being, who made and who governs the world, yet I find men reason very differently about these matters.

The heathen philosophers, who generally acknowledge one supreme and sovereign Deity, did not think it incongruous, nor any affront or diminution to the supreme God, to ascribe an inferior kind of divinity, nor to pay an inferior degree of religious worship to those excellent spirits, which are so much above us, and have so great a share in the government of this lower world, no more than it is an affront to a sovereign monarch, to honour and reverence his great ministers of state, or peculiar favourites. And the Church of Rome, as she has corrupted Christianity with the worship of angels and saints departed, so she defends herself with the same arguments and reasons, which were long since alleged by Celsus and Porphyry, and other heathen philosophers, in defence of their Pagan idolatry.

And it must be confessed, that these arguments are very popular, and have something so agreeable in them, to the natural notions of civil honour and respect, which admits of great variety of degrees, that I do not wonder that such vast numbers of men, both wise and unwise, have been imposed on by them.

For there is certainly a proportionable reverence and respect due even to created excellencies, and every degree of power challenges and commands a just regard, and we are bound to be very thankful, not only to God, who is the First Cause, and the supreme Giver of all good things, but to our immediate benefactors also. And therefore if there be a sort of middle beings, as the heathens believed, and as the Church of Rome asserts, between us and the supreme God, who take particular care of us, and either by their power and interest in the government of the world, or by their intercessions with the supreme God, can and do bestow a great many blessings on us; it seems as natural and necessary to fear and reverence, to honour and worship them, and to give them thanks for their care and patronage of us, as it is to court a powerful favourite, who by his interest and authority can obtain any request we make to our prince; and the first seems to be no greater injury to God than the second is to a prince. Thus St. Paul, Col. ii. 18, observes, that there is a show of humi-

lity in worshipping angels; that men dare not immediately approach so glorious a majesty as God is, but make their addresses to those excellent spirits which attend the throne of God, and are the ministers of his providence.

But then every one who believes that there is one Supreme God, who made all other beings, though never so perfect and excellent, must acknowledge, that as there is nothing common to God and creatures, so there must be a peculiar worship due to God, which no creature can challenge any share in. It is no affront to a prince to pay some inferior degrees of civil honour and respect to his ministers and favourites, because, as the difference between a prince and his subjects is not founded in nature, but in civil order; so there are different degrees of civil respect proportioned to the different ranks and degrees of men in the commonwealth. There is a degree of pre-eminency which is sacred and peculiar to the person of the prince, and no prince will suffer his greatest favourite to usurp the prerogative honours which belong to the crown; but while they are contented with such respects as are due to their rank and station, this is no injury to the prince; for all civil honour is not peculiar to the prince, but only a supereminent degree of it; and therefore inferior degrees of honour may be given to other persons.

But though there are different degrees of civil honour proper to different ranks and degrees of men, who all partake in the same nature, and are distinguished only by their different places in the commonwealth; yet in this sense there are no different degrees of religious worship. All religious worship is peculiar to the Divine Nature, which is but one, and common only to three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one "God, blessed for ever. Amen." Civil honour and religious worship differ in the whole kind and species of actions, and have as different objects as God and creatures; and we may as well argue from those different degrees of civil honour among men, to prove that there is an inferior degree of civil honour due to beasts, as that there is an inferior degree of religious worship due to some men. For all degrees of religious worship are as peculiar and appropriate to God, as civil respects are to men, and as the highest degree of civil honour is to a sovereign prince.

However, should we grant that some excellent creatures might be capable of some inferior degrees of religious worship; yet as the prince is the fountain of civil honour, which no

subject must presume to usurp, without a grant from his prince ; so no creature, how excellent soever, has any natural and inherent right to any degree of religious worship, and therefore we must not presume to worship any creature without God's command, nor to pay any other degree of worship to them, but what God has prescribed and instituted ; and the only way to know this, is to examine the Scriptures, which is the only external revelation we have of the will of God.

Let us then inquire, what the sense of Scripture is in this controversy ; and I shall distinctly examine the testimonies both of the Old and New Testament, concerning the object of religious worship.

SECT. II.

The Testimonies of the Mosaical Law considered.

I. To begin with the Old Testament ; and nothing is more plain in all the Scripture, than that the laws of Moses confine religious worship to that one supreme God, the Lord Jehovah, who created the heavens and the earth. For,

1. The Israelites were expressly commanded to worship the Lord Jehovah, and to worship no other being ; as our Saviour himself assures us, who, I suppose, will be allowed for a very good expositor of the laws of Moses.

It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matth. iv. 10. In the Hebrew text, from whence our Saviour cites this law, it is only said, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him," (Deut. vi. 13. x. 20.) without that addition "of him only." And yet both the Septuagint and the Vulgar Latin, read the words as our Saviour doth, "Him only shalt thou serve ;" and the authority of our Saviour is sufficient to justify this interpretation ; and withal, gives us a general rule, which puts an end to this controversy ; that as often as we are commanded in Scripture to worship God, we are commanded also to worship none beside him.

For indeed the first commandment is very express in this matter, and all other laws which concern the object of worship, must in all reason be expounded by that : "Thou shalt have none other Gods before me," Exod. xx. 3. The Septuagint renders it *πλὴν ἐμοῦ*, and so do the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, to the same sense. And it is universally concluded by

all expositors that I have seen, that the true interpretation of this commandment is, that we must worship no other God, but the Lord Jehovah. To pay religious worship to any being, does, in the Scripture-notion, make that being our God; which is the only reason, why they are commanded "not to have any other gods." For there is but one true God, and therefore in a strict sense, they can have no other gods, because there are no other gods to be had; but whatever beings they worship, they make that their god by worshipping it; and so the heathens had a great many gods, but the Jews are commanded to have but one God, that is, to worship none else besides him.

In other places, God expressly forbids them to worship any "strange gods, or the gods of the people, or those nations that were round about them," Deut. vi. 14. And lest we should suspect that they were forbid to worship the gods of the people, only because those heathen idolaters worshipped devils and evil spirits, the prophet Jeremiah gives us a general notion, who are to be reputed false gods, and not to be worshipped: "Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens," Jer. x. 11. So that whatever being is worshipped, whether it be a good or a bad spirit, "which did not make the heavens and the earth," is a false god to such worshippers; and I suppose the Church of Rome will not say, that saints, or angels, or the Virgin Mary (as much as they magnify her), made the heavens and the earth. And then, according to this rule, they ought not to be worshipped.

But to put this past doubt, that the true meaning of these laws is to forbid the worship of any other being besides the supreme God, I shall observe two or three things in our Saviour's answer to the devil's temptation, which will give great light and strength to it.

1. That our Saviour absolutely rejects the worship of any other being together with the supreme God. The thing our Saviour condemns, is not the renouncing the worship of God for the worship of creatures (for the devil never tempted him to this), but the worship of any other being besides God, though we still continue to worship the supreme God: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Which is a plain demonstration, that men may believe and worship the supreme God, and yet be idolaters, if they worship anything else besides him. The devil did not desire our Saviour to renounce the worship of the supreme God,

but was contented that he should worship God still, so he would but worship him also. And therefore it is no reason to excuse the Church of Rome from idolatry, because they worship the supreme God, as well as saints and angels; this they may do, and be idolaters still; for idolatry does not consist merely in renouncing the worship of the supreme God, but in worshipping anything else, though we continue to worship him. When the Jews worshipped their Baalims and false gods, they did not wholly renounce the worship of the God of Israel; and the heathens themselves, especially the wisest men amongst them, did acknowledge one supreme God, though they worshipped a great many inferior deities with him.

2. Our Saviour, in his answer to the devil's temptation, does not urge his being a wicked and apostate spirit, an enemy and a rebel against God, but gives such a reason why he could not worship him, as equally excludes all creatures, whether good or bad spirits, from any right to divine worship. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Him and none else, whether they be good or bad spirits; for our Saviour does not confine his answer to either, and therefore includes them both.

When we charge the Church of Rome with too plain an imitation of the Pagan idolatry in that worship they paid to their inferior demons, which was nothing more than what the Church of Rome now gives to saints and angels; they think it a sufficient answer, that the heathens worshipped devils and apostate spirits, but they worship only the friends and favourites of God, blessed saints and angels.

Now I shall not at present examine the truth of this pretence, but shall refer my reader to a more learned person* for satisfaction in this matter; but if it were true, yet it is nothing to the purpose, if our Saviour's answer to the devil be good.

For let us suppose, that the Pope of Rome, who calls himself Christ's vicar, had at this time been in Christ's stead to have answered the devil's temptations, and let us be so charitable for once as to suppose that (saving always his indirect power over the kingdoms of this world *in ordine ad spiritualia*) he would not worship the devil to gain "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." Consider then, how the Pope of Rome could answer this temptation, "All this I will give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Could he answer

* Stillingfleet's Defence of the Discourse of Idolatry.

as our Saviour does? "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." How easily might the devil reply, "Is this indeed your infallible opinion, and the judgment and practice of your Church, to serve God only? Do you not also serve and worship St. Paul and St. Peter, and the Virgin Mary, besides a great many other obscure and doubtful saints? This is downright heresy, to confine all religious worship to God." Here now is matter of fact against the Pope, that he does worship other beings besides God, and if he will shew any reason for his not worshipping the devil, he must quite alter our Saviour's answer, and not plead for himself, "that he is bound to worship God and him only," but that he is "bound to worship God only and good spirits; and therefore the devil being a wicked and apostate spirit, it is not lawful to worship him." So that if our Saviour gave a sufficient answer to the devil's temptation, it must be equally unlawful to worship good and bad spirits; there may be some peculiar aggravations in having communion with devils, but the idolatry of worshipping good and bad spirits is the same.

3. Our Saviour's answer to the devil appropriates all kinds and degrees of religious worship to God alone. The devil was not then so good a Schoolman, as nicely to distinguish and dispute the degrees of religious worship with our Saviour, but would have been contented with any degree of religious worship. He did not pretend to be the supreme God, nor to have the disposal of all the kingdoms of the world in his own right; but acknowledges, that it was delivered to him, Luke iv. 6; and now by virtue of that grant, he gives it to whom he will. Now it is impossible, in the nature of the thing, to worship any being as supreme, whom at the same time we acknowledge not to be supreme. And therefore the devil asks no more of our Saviour, than that he would fall down and worship him; which is such an inferior degree of worship, as Papists every day pay to images and saints; and yet this our Saviour refuses to do, and that for this reason, that we must worship God only: which must signify, that we must not give the least degree of divine worship to any creatures; or else it is not a satisfactory answer to the devil's temptation, who did not require any certain and determinate degree of worship, but left him at liberty to use what distinctions he pleased, and to pay what degree of worship he saw fit; whether absolute or relative, supreme or subordinate, terminative or transient, so he would but fall down and worship him any way, or in any degree, he

left him to be his own Schoolman and casuist: but of this more presently.

4. As the laws of Moses, in general, appropriate all religious worship to God, command us to worship God, and him only; so the whole Jewish religion was fitted only for the worship of the Lord Jehovah.

I suppose our adversaries will not deny, that the Tabernacle and Temple of Jerusalem were peculiarly consecrated to the honour and worship of the Lord Jehovah: this was the house where he dwelt, where he placed his name, and the symbols of his presence. It was a great profanation of that holy place, to have the worship of any strange gods set up in it; and yet this was the only place of worship appointed by the law of Moses; they had but one temple to worship in, and this one temple consecrated to the peculiar worship of one God; which is a plain demonstration, that they were not allowed to worship any other god, because they had no place to worship him in.

And this I think is a plain proof, that all the worship which was confined to their temple, or related to it, was peculiar to the Lord Jehovah, because that was his house, and then all the Jewish worship was so, which was either to be performed at the temple, or had a relation and dependence on the temple-worship.

Sacrifice was the principal part of the Jewish worship, and this we know was confined to the temple. Moses expressly commands Israel, Deut. xii. 13, 14: "Take heed to thyself, that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest. But in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes, there shalt thou offer thy burnt-offerings, and there shalt thou do all that I command thee." The prophets indeed, especially before the building of the temple, did erect altars at other places for occasional sacrifices: for as God reserved a liberty to himself to dispense with his own law in extraordinary cases, so it was presumed, that what was done by prophets was done by a divine command; but there was to be no ordinary or standing altar for sacrifice, but at the tabernacle or temple; this we may see in that dispute which had like to have happened between the children of Israel, and the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, about the Altar of Testimony, which these two tribes and a half built on the other side of Jordan, Josh. xxii. It was agreed on all hands, that had it been intended for an altar for sacrifice, it had been rebellion against the Lord to have built any altar besides the

altar of the Lord, though they had offered no sacrifice but to the Lord Jehovah, vers. 16, 19, 22, 23. The same is evident from God's dislike of their offering sacrifices in their high places, though they sacrificed only to the God of Israel. So that all sacrifices were to be offered at the temple on the altar of God, and therefore were offered only to that God, whose temple and altar it was. And indeed this is expressly provided for in the law: "He that sacrificeth to any god, save to the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed," Exod. xxii. 20.

And as their sacrifices were appropriated to the temple, so in some sense were their prayers, which were offered up in virtue of their sacrifice. And therefore this is a peculiar name for the temple, that it was "the house of prayer," Isa. lvi. 7; Matth. xxi. 13; 1 Kings viii. Here God was more immediately present to hear those prayers which were offered to him, according to Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple. It is true, the devout Jews did pray to God wherever they were, though at a great distance from the temple, whether in the land of Canaan, or out of it; but then there are two things which shew that relation their prayers had to the temple worship. 1. That their stated hours of prayer were the hours of sacrifice, which plainly signified, that they offered up their prayers in conjunction with those sacrifices which were at that time offered in the temple, and therefore that they prayed only to that God to whom they sacrificed; for we must consider, that the constant morning and evening sacrifices were not particular sacrifices, but were offered for the whole congregation of Israel, and therefore every man had a share in them. Hence the time of offering the sacrifice is called the hour of prayer. Thus "Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour," Acts iii. 1, that is, the time of the evening sacrifice. Hence are such expressions as that of the Psalmist, "Let my prayer be set before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Nay, it is most probable, that when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and the people carried captive into Babylon, and the daily sacrifice ceased, yet the "devout people" observed the hours of sacrifice for their prayers. Thus Daniel prayed three times a day, which most likely were evening and morning, and at noon, Dan. vi. 10; Psal. lv. 17; where evening and morning no doubt signify the time of the evening and morning sacrifice; and we are told, that the angel Gabriel came to Daniel, and

touched him about the time of the evening oblation, Dan. ix. 21. But, 2ndly, besides this, when they offered up their prayers to God in other parts of the nation, or in other countries, they prayed towards Jerusalem and the temple of God, as we now lift up our eyes to heaven where God dwells. Thus Solomon, in his prayer of dedication, does not only beg of God to hear those prayers which were made to him in that house, but those also which were made towards it, as the words must signify in several places. In general he prays, 1 Kings viii. 30, "Hearken thou to the prayer of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray towards this place;" *אל-המקום* may signify both *in* and *towards* this place, and here includes both, as appears from the following instances, which refer both to prayers made in the temple, and to those prayers which were made towards the temple by persons who were at a distance. Thus in whatever part of the nation they wanted rain, which might be at a great distance from Jerusalem, they were to pray towards this place, ver. 35. The same was to be done in case of famine and pestilence, &c. ver. 37. Or if they were besieged in any of their cities, when they could not go to the temple to pray. Nay, "what prayer or supplication soever shall be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house, then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive," ver. 39. Thus when they went out to battle, they were to pray towards the city of Jerusalem, and towards the temple, and when they were carried captive into the enemy's land, they were to pray to God towards the land which God had given them, towards the holy city, and towards the temple, ver. 48. And accordingly it was the constant practice of Daniel, when he was in Babylon, to pray three times a day to God, with his window open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, Dan. vi. 10.

So that though the temple were not the only place where they might lawfully pray to God; yet all their prayers were to be directed to the temple, and receive their virtue and acceptance from their relation to the temple and the temple-worship. This was a standing rule for the whole Jewish nation, that whenever they prayed, they offered up their prayers in the temple, or towards it; and this is generally observed by them to this day: for the reason why they generally now turn themselves towards the east when they pray, is not out of any respect to the rising of the sun, but because they live in

western countries; and so by turning to the east, they look towards Jerusalem, and the place where the temple stood.* And this is as plain evidence, that all their prayers, as well as sacrifices, were to be offered only to that God who dwelt in the temple. And therefore as they are commanded to pray to God, and this is made the peculiar attribute of God, that he heareth prayers, and therefore unto him shall all flesh come, Psal. lxxv. 2; so they are expressly commanded not to make mention of the name of the heathen gods, that is, not to pray to them, the prayers of the heathen consisting of a frequent repetition of the names of their gods, as we see in the priests of Baal, who cried from morning till evening, saying, "O Baal, hear us," 1 Kings xviii. 26.

Thus the Jews were commanded to bring all their vows, first-fruits, tithes, and offerings, to the temple, which is a plain sign to whom they were offered. The seventh-day sabbath was a sign that they worshipped that God who created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, and delivered them from their Egyptian bondage, and gave them rest in that good land, both which reasons are assigned by Moses, and therefore God commands them by the Prophet Ezekiel, "Hallow my sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God," Ezek. xx. 20.

They had but three solemn festivals every year, and they were all in remembrance of the great works of God, and all the males were to go up to Jerusalem to keep these feasts, and therefore all these were the feasts of the Lord Jehovah.

And as they were to pray only to God, so they were only "to swear by his name," which is another part of religious worship; and therefore, "to swear by the Lord of hosts," is called the language of Canaan, Deut. x. 20; Isa. xix. 18.

So that all the parts of the Jewish worship were appropriated to the Lord Jehovah, he was the only object of their dread and fear, and religious adorations. And when we consider that God had chosen them to be a peculiar people to himself, that the land was a holy land, God's peculiar inheritance, which he gave by promise to their fathers, and the temple was his house, "where he dwelt among them," it cannot be expected that any other gods might be worshipped by such a people, in such a land, and in such a house, as God had appropriated to himself.

3. It is very considerable, that we have no approved ex-

* Buxtorfii Synag. Jud. p. 222.

ample under the law, of any worship paid to saints or angels, or any other being but God alone. We have too many sad examples of the idolatry of the Jews, both in worshipping the molten calf which Aaron made, and Jeroboam's calves, and Baalims, and other heathen gods: but had it been allowed by their law to have paid any inferior degree of religious worship to saints and angels (which is now asserted by the Church of Rome to be a matter of such great benefit and advantage to mankind) it is very strange that we should not have one example of it throughout the Scripture, nor any authentic records among the Jewish writers: all the Psalms of David are directed to God alone, and yet we cannot think but such a devout man would have bestowed some hymns upon his patron and tutelar saints, had he worshipped any such, as well as the Papists do now.

This the Church of Rome sees and acknowledges, and thinks she answers too, when she gives us the reason why it could not be so under the law; because those Old Testament saints were not then admitted into heaven, to the immediate vision and fruition of God. Heaven gates were not open till the resurrection and ascension of our Saviour, and therefore those blessed spirits were not in a condition to be our intercessors and mediators till they were received into heaven; but now, saints and martyrs ascend directly into heaven, and reign with Christ in glory, and it seems share with him in his peculiar worship and glory too.

Now, 1. Whether this be so or not, the Scriptures assign no such reason for it; and therefore it is likely there might be other reasons, and I think I have made it very plain that there was. We are not inquiring, "For what reason the Jewish Church did not worship saints and angels;" but "whether they did worship them or not?" And it appears that they never did; so that we have neither precept nor example for this during all the time of the Jewish Church: which is all we intend to prove by this argument.

2. But yet it is evident, that this is not a good reason, why the Jews did not worship angels under the law. For certainly angels were as much in heaven then as they are now, whatever saints were. They are represented in the Old Testament as the constant attendants and retinue of God, and the great ministers of his providence, and therefore they were as capable of divine worship in the time of the law, as they are now; nay, I think, a little more. For the law itself was

given by the ministry of angels, and their appearances were more frequent and familiar, and the world seemed to be more under the government of angels then, than it is now, since Christ is made the head of the Church, and exalted above all principalities and powers.

And therefore sometimes the advocates of the Church of Rome make some little offers to prove the worship of angels in those days: to this purpose they allege that form of benediction, which Jacob used in blessing the sons of Joseph, "The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads," Gen. xlviii. 16.

But, 1. This is not a direct prayer to the angel, but only his committing of them to the care and patronage of that angel, with a prayer to God for that purpose: and if he by experience had found that God had appointed his angel to defend and protect him, it was but reasonable to pray to God, that the same angel might protect his posterity.

2. But yet, according to the sense of the ancient Fathers, this was no created angel and spirit, but the Son and Word of God, the Angel of the Presence, who is so often in Scripture styled Jehovah, a name which can belong to no created spirit. And it is no hard matter to make it highly probable, that this is that angel who redeemed Jacob out of all his troubles. But it is strange if angels were worshipped under the Old Testament, we should have no clearer and plainer evidence of it than such a single text, which was never expounded, either by any Jewish or Christian writers, to this sense till of late days; and here the priests of the Church of Rome are to be put in mind of their oath, to expound Scripture according to the unanimous consent of the ancient Fathers.

SECT. III.

The Testimonies of the Gospel considered; whether Christ and his Apostles have made any alteration in the Object of our Worship.

LET us now proceed, in the second place, to consider the writings of the New Testament, and examine what they teach us concerning the object of our worship. And that Christ and his Apostles have made no change in the object of our worship, will appear from these considerations.

1. That they could not do it. Had they ever attempted to set up the worship of any other beings besides the one Supreme

God, the Lord Jehovah, the Jews were expressly commanded by their law not to believe them, nor hearken to them, whatever signs and wonders and miracles they had wrought. Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 : "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them ; thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams ; for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and you shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet or dreamer of dreams shall be put to death," &c. In which law, there are some things very material to be observed in this present dispute.

1. When they are forbidden to hearken to any prophet, who seduces them to the worship of any other gods, this must be extended to all those instances of idolatrous worship, which are forbid by the law of Moses, whatever is opposed to the worship of one supreme and sovereign being, the Lord Jehovah. And therefore whether these prophets seduced them from the worship of the Lord Jehovah, to the worship of other gods ; or persuaded them to worship other gods besides the Lord Jehovah, whether they were any of those gods which were at that time worshipped by other nations, or any other gods whom the ignorance and superstition of the people should create in after-ages, whether good or bad spirits, the case is the same : whoever persuaded them to worship any other being with or besides the supreme God, was to be rejected by them ; for this is the sense of the Mosaical laws concerning the worship of one supreme God, as I have already proved ; and the serving other gods in this place, is opposed to the worship of one God, and therefore must include whatever according to the law of Moses is contrary to the worship of one supreme Being.

2. This law makes the worship of one God eternal and unchangeable. There is no way of altering any divine laws, but by a new revelation of God's will ; and there is no way to give authority to such a revelation, but by miracles or prophecy ; but in this case, miracles and prophecy itself can give no authority, because God himself has expressly forbid us to

hearken to any prophet, whatever signs or wonders are wrought by him, who teacheth the worship of any other being besides the one supreme God. So that the law of Moses having expressly forbid the worship of any other being besides God, and as expressly forbid us to hearken to any prophet, though a worker of miracles, who teaches any other worship, it is impossible that this law should ever be altered, because we are beforehand warned by God himself, not to give credit to any prophet, whatever he be, or whatever he do, who attempts any alteration of it. And therefore had Christ or his Apostles taught the worship of saints and angels, it had been a just reason for the unbelief of the Jews, notwithstanding all the miracles that were wrought by them ; and it is well the Jews never had any just occasion to make this objection against our Saviour ; for if they had, I know not how it would have been answered. I say, a just occasion ; for the Jews did urge this very law against him before Pilate : “ We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God,” John xix. 7. In which they refer to that discourse of our Saviour, John x. 29, 30, where he affirms that God is his Father, and plainly tells them, “ I and my Father are one ;” for which saying they attempted to stone him for blasphemy, and that being a man, he made himself a God, ver. 33. But though he did indeed (as the Jews rightly inferred) make himself a God by this saying, yet he did not preach any new God to them, but affirmed himself to be one with his Father, that same supreme God, the Lord Jehovah, whom they were commanded to worship by their law ; he made no alteration in the object of their worship, but only did more clearly and distinctly reveal the Father to them, as manifesting himself in and by his only begotten Son. And therefore he did not offend against this law, by seducing them to the worship of any other gods besides the Lord Jehovah ; which if he had done, their accusation had been just, and all the miracles which he did could not have secured him from the guilt and punishment of an impostor.

Which shews us what force there is in that argument, which the Church of Rome urges from those miracles which have been wrought at the tombs of martyrs, to prove the religious invocation of them ; if such miracles were ever wrought, it was in testimony to the truth of Christianity, for which they suffered, not to betray men to a superstitious and idolatrous worship of them ; ten thousand miracles should

never convince me of the lawfulness of praying to saints departed, while I have such a plain and express law against believing all miracles upon any such account.

Nor can it reasonably be said, that this law was only given to the Jews, and therefore obliges none but them; for we must remember that Christ was originally sent to the Jews, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and therefore by this law, he was bound not to teach the worship of any other beings, under the penalty of death; and they were bound not to own and receive him if he did; and therefore it was impossible for the true Messias to introduce the worship of any being besides the one supreme God; and if Christ could not teach any such doctrine, I know not how the worship of saints and angels should ever come to be a doctrine of Christianity. For what Christ himself cannot do, none of his followers may, who had no other commission but to teach those things which they had learned from him; and he could not give commission to preach such doctrines, as he himself had no authority to preach.

So that though this law was not originally given to the Gentiles, but only to the Jews; yet it equally obliges the Christian Church, whether Jews or Gentiles, because Christ himself, who was the Author of our religion, was obliged by it. The worship of one supreme God, and of none else, is as fundamental to Christianity, as it is to Judaism; for Christianity is now, or ought to be, the religion of the Jews, as well as Gentiles; and yet the Jews are expressly forbid by this law ever to own any religion, which allows the worship of any being besides God: and therefore the worship of one God, and none else, must be fundamental in Christianity, if the people of the Jews are, or ever were, bound to embrace the faith of Christ.

SECT. IV.

2. AND therefore I observe, in the next place, that Christ and his Apostles have made no alteration at all in the object of our worship. Christ urges that Old Testament law in answer to the devil's temptation: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matth. iv. 10. Which, it seems, is as standing a law, after the appearance of Christ, as it was before. He gives no other direction to his disciples but to pray to their heavenly Father, and in that form of prayer which he gave them, he teaches

them to address their prayer neither to saints nor angels, but to God only : "Our Father which art in heaven."

When St. Paul charges the heathens with idolatry, he does it upon this account, that they joined the worship of creatures with the worship of the supreme God : "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened," Rom. i. 21. Where the Apostle acknowledges that they did know God, that they did own that supreme and sovereign Being who made the world ; and does suppose that they did worship him also. For he does not charge them with renouncing the worship of that God who made the world, but that they did not "glorify him as God," which only taxes the manner of their worship. And wherein that was faulty, he declares in the following verses. As that they made mean and vile representations of him, that "they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things," ver. 23 ; and thus "changed the truth of God into a lie." But this was not the only fault, but they also gave his incommunicable worship to creatures, "and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen," ver. 25. Which words do plainly suppose, that they did worship the Creator of all things, but besides the Creator (for so *παρὰ* may signify) they worshipped the creature also ; which proves that the worship of the supreme God will not excuse those from idolatry who worship any thing else besides him. For the opposition lies between the Creator and the creature, be it a good or a bad creature it matters not as to religious worship, which must be given to neither. Or if we render the words, as our translators do, "more than the Creator" (for *παρὰ* is often used comparatively) yet so it supposes, that they did worship the Creator, and when they are said to worship the creature more, that cannot signify a higher degree of worship, but more frequent addresses ; and thus the Church of Rome worships the Virgin Mary more than the Creator, for they say ten prayers (if they be prayers) to the Virgin Mary for one to God ; ten *Ave Maries* for one *Pater Noster*.

The same Apostle determines this matter in as plain words as can be : "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many and lords many ; but to us there is but one God the Father, of

whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him," 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. Where in opposition to the Pagan idolatry, who worshipped a great many gods, not as supreme independent deities (for they acknowledged but one supreme God, who made all the other gods), but either as sharers in the government of the world, or mediators and intercessors for them with the supreme God, the Apostle plainly asserts, that to us Christians there is but one God, the Maker of all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, our great Mediator and Advocate with God the Father; that is, we must worship none else. And that none of the distinctions which are used by the Church of Rome to justify that worship which they pay to saints and angels can have any place here, is evident from this consideration: for either these distinctions were known, or they were not known when the Apostle wrote this, and in both cases his silence is an argument against them. If they were known, he rejects them, and determines against them; for he affirms absolutely, and without the *salvo* of any distinctions, that "we have but one God, and one Mediator;" that is, that we must worship no more. If they were not known (as it is likely they were not, because the Apostle takes no notice of them), it is a plain argument that these distinctions are of no use, unless they will say that St. Paul, who was guided by an infallible Spirit, was ignorant of some very useful and material notions about the object of worship. If the Apostle did not know these distinctions, it is evident they are of a late date, and therefore can have no authority against an Apostolical determination: if he did know them, he could have no regard to them, and therefore made no allowance for such exceptions.

Nay, the same Apostle does not only give such general rules, as necessarily exclude the worship of saints and angels, but does expressly condemn it, and warns the Christians against it. He foretells of the apostasy of the latter days, 1 Tim. iv. 1, "wherein some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and the doctrine of devils," διδασκαλίαις δαιμονίων, the doctrine of demons, the doctrine of worshipping demons, or some new inferior deity, saints or angels, or whatever they are, as mediators or intercessors between God and men. This is the true notion of the doctrine of demons amongst the heathens;* and the Apostle tells us, the time

* See Mr. Joseph Mede's *Apostacy of the latter Times*.

shall come when some Christians (for it is evident he speaks here of the apostasy of Christians) shall fall into the same idolatry ; which is an exact prophecy of what we now see done in the Church of Rome, who have the same notion of their saints and angels, and pay the same worship to them, which the heathens formerly did to their demons, or inferior gods.

3. And as a farther confirmation of this, I observe, that the Gospel forbids idolatry, without giving us any new notion of idolatry : and therefore it has made no alteration at all in this doctrine, of the worship of one God, which Moses so expressly commanded the Jews to observe. For the Gospel was preached to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles ; nay, the Jews had the first and most undoubted right to it, as being the posterity of Abraham, to whom the promise of the Messias was made ; and therefore as the law was at first given them by Moses, so it did still oblige them in all such cases, wherein the Gospel did not in express terms make a change or alteration of the law ; and therefore since there was no such alteration made, and yet the law against idolatry was renewed and confirmed by the authority of the Gospel, what could the Jews understand else by idolatry, but what was accounted idolatry by the law of Moses ; that is, the worship of any other being besides the supreme God, the Lord Jehovah. And since it is evident, that there are not two Gospels, one for the Jews and another for the Gentiles, all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, must be under the obligation of the same law, to worship only one God.

The notion of idolatry must alter as the object of religious worship does. If we must worship one God, and none besides him, then it is idolatry to worship any other being but the supreme God ; for idolatry consists in giving religious worship to such beings as we ought not to worship ; and by the law of Moses, they were to worship none but God, and therefore the worship of any other being was idolatry. But if the object of our worship be enlarged, and the Gospel has made it lawful to worship saints and angels, then we must seek out some other notion of idolatry, that it consists in the worshipping wicked spirits, or in the giving supreme and sovereign worship to inferior deities, which the Church of Rome thinks impossible, in the nature of the thing, for any man to do, who knows them to be inferior spirits. But if idolatry be the same under the New Testament that it was under the Old, the object of our worship must be the same

too ; and we have reason to believe that it is the same, when we are commanded to keep ourselves from idols, and to fly from idolatry, but are nowhere in the New Testament expressly told, what this idolatry is ; which supposes that we must learn what it is from some antecedent laws, and there were no such laws in being but the laws of Moses.

The only thing that can be said in this case, is, that the Apostle refers them not to any written law, but to the natural notions of idolatry : but with what reason is this said, will soon appear, if we consider to whom the Apostle writes ; and they were both Jewish and heathen converts. As for the heathens, they had corrupted all their natural notions of idolatry, and had no sense at all of this sin till they were converted to Christianity ; and therefore they were not likely to understand the true notion of idolatry without being taught it ; and it is not probable the Apostles would leave them to guess what idolatry is. As for the Jews, God would not from the beginning trust to their natural notions, but gave them express laws about idolatry, which though they are the same laws which natural reason dictates to us, as most agreeable to the nature and worship of God, yet since the experience of the world, which was overrun by idolatrous worship, did sufficiently prove, that all men do not use their reason aright in these matters, God would not trust to the use of their reason in the weighty concernments of his own worship and glory, but gives them an express positive law about it ; and Christ and his Apostles having done nothing to repeal this law, they leave them under the authority of it ; and when they warn them against idols and idolatry, without giving them any new laws about it, they must in all reason be presumed to refer them to those laws which they already had.

SECT. V.

4. As a farther proof of this, I observe, that Christ and his Apostles did not abrogate, but only complete and perfect the Mosaical laws. Our Saviour with great zeal and earnestness disowns any such intention or design, Matth. v. 17 : “ Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil,” πληρῶσαι, to fill it up, by fulfilling the types and prophecies of it, by exchanging a ceremonial for a real righteousness, or by perfecting its moral precepts with new instances and degrees of virtue. And therefore he adds, “ For verily I say unto you, till heaven and

earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." And St. Paul, Acts xxi. 21, 22, who was looked on by believing Jews as a great enemy to the law of Moses, does renounce all such pretences: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid, yea, we establish the law," Rom. iii. 31.

Indeed, had Christ or his Apostles attempted to have given any new laws contrary to the laws of Moses, it had justified the Jews in their unbelief; for God by his prophet Isaiah, had given them this express rule to examine all new doctrines by: "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," Isa. viii. 20. And that Christ himself is not excepted from this rule, appears in this, that this is joined with the prophecy of the Messiah, both before and after; as you may see in Isa. viii. 13, 14, and chap. ix. 6, 7; and therefore Christ and his Apostles always make their appeals to the writings of the Old Testament; and St. Paul, in all his disputes with the Jews, urges them with no other authority but the Scriptures; and though the miracles which were wrought by the Apostles, did move the Jews to hearken to them, and greatly to dispose them to believe their doctrine, yet it was the authority of the Scriptures whereon their faith was founded; as St. Peter tells those to whom he wrote, that though they preached nothing to them concerning the coming of Christ, but what they were eye-witnesses of; and though God had given testimony to him by a voice from heaven, which they heard, when they were with him in the holy mount, yet he adds, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts," 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18, 19. That is, the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and therefore the Jews of Berea are greatly commended for their diligence in searching the Scriptures, and examining St. Paul's doctrine by them, Acts xvii. 10, 11. And this is assigned as the reason why many of them believed.

To apply this then to our present purpose, I observe:

1. That if Christ did not make any new laws in contradiction to the law of Moses, then he could make no alteration in the object of religious worship. He could not introduce the worship of saints and angels without contradicting that law, which commands us to worship no other being but the one supreme God. For the worship of saints and angels

together with the supreme God, is a direct contradiction to that law which commands us to worship God alone ; though we should suppose, that in the nature of the thing, the worship of saints and angels were consistent with the worship of the supreme God, yet it is not consistent with that law, which commands us to worship none but God. So that let this be a natural or positive law, or whatever men please to call it, it is a very plain and express law, and Christ never did contradict any express law of God.

It is true, that typical and ceremonial worship, which God commanded the Jews to observe, is now out of date under the Gospel, and does no longer oblige Christians ; but the reason of that is, because it has received its accomplishment and perfection in Christ. Christ has perfected the Jewish sacrifices, and put an end to them by offering a more perfect and meritorious sacrifice, even the sacrifice of himself. The circumcision, washings, purifications of the law, are perfected by the laws of internal purity. The external ceremonies of the law cease, but they are perfected by an evangelical righteousness. But this I say, that Christ never repealed any Mosaical law, but by fulfilling and perfecting it : "He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil." Now methinks I need not prove, that the worship of saints and angels is not a fulfilling but a destroying that law, which commands us to worship none but God. And it is not enough to say, that these are positive laws given to the Jews (though that be said without any reason), for let them shew me any positive law relating to the worship of God, which Christ has wholly abrogated without fulfilling it.

2. Yet as a farther proof, that Christ has made no alteration in the object of our worship, that he has not introduced the worship of saints, or angels, or images, into the Christian Church, which was so expressly forbid by the Jewish law, I observe, that according to our Saviour's own rule, that "he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil ;" these laws of worshipping one God, and none besides him, were not liable to any change and alteration ; because there was nothing to be perfected or fulfilled in them. He made no change or alteration but by way of perfecting and fulfilling ; and therefore those laws which had nothing to be fulfilled, must remain as they were without any change.

To perfect or fulfil a law, must either signify to accomplish what was prefigured by it, and thus Christ fulfilled all the

types and prophecies of the law, which related to his person, or his undertaking, as the Jewish priesthood and sacrifices, &c. or to prescribe that real righteousness which was signified and represented by the outward ceremony, and so Christ fulfilled the laws of circumcision, washings, purifications, sabbaths, &c. by commanding the circumcision of the heart, and the purity of mind and spirit, or by supplying what was defective: and thus he fulfilled the moral law by new instances of virtue, by requiring something more perfect of us than what the letter of the Mosaical law enjoined. These are all the ways that I know of, and all that we have any instances of in Scripture of fulfilling laws.

Now I suppose, no man will say, that the first commandment, which forbids the worship of any other gods besides the Lord Jehovah, is a typical law, for pray what is it a type of? Nor can any pretend that the first commandment is a ceremonial law, for it prescribes no rite of worship at all, but only determines the object of worship.

As for the third way of fulfilling laws, by perfecting them with some new instances and degrees of virtue, it can have no place here, for this law is as perfect as it can be. For it is a negative law, "Thou shalt have none other God." Now that which is forbid without any reserve or limitation, is perfectly and absolutely forbid. There are no degrees of nothing, though there are several degrees of perfection in things which have a being; and therefore though there are degrees in affirmative laws (for some laws may require greater attainments than others, and one man may do better than another, and yet both do that which is good), yet there are no degrees in not doing a thing, and no law can do more than forbid that which the lawgiver will not have done.

And besides, this way of fulfilling laws does not abrogate any command, but adds to it; it may restrain those liberties which were formerly indulged, but it does not forbid anything which was formerly our duty to do; for when God requires greater degrees of virtue from us, he does not forbid the less. And therefore in this way, Christ might forbid more than was forbid by the law of Moses, but we cannot suppose that he gave liberty to do that which the law forbids, which is not to perfect but to abrogate a law.

But to put an end to this dispute; if Christ have perfected these laws, by indulging the worshipping of saints and angels under the Gospel, which was so expressly forbidden by the

law, then it seems the worship of saints and angels is a more perfect state of religion, than the worship of the one supreme God alone.

If this be true, then though the heathens might mistake in the object of their worship, yet the manner of their worship was more perfect and excellent than what God himself prescribed the Jews. For they worshipped a great many inferior deities, as well as the supreme God ; and if this be the most perfect and excellent worship, it is wonderful to me that God should forbid it in the worship of himself ; that he should prescribe a more imperfect worship to his own people, than the heathens paid to their gods.

For to say that God forbade the worship of any being besides himself, because this liberty had been abused by the heathens to idolatry, is no reason at all. For though we should suppose that the heathens worshipped evil spirits for gods, this had been easily prevented, had God told them what saints and angels they should have made their addresses to ; and this had been a more likely way to cure them of idolatry, than to have forbade the worship of all inferior deities ; for when they had such numerous deities of their own to have made application to, they would have been more easily weaned from the gods of other countries.

And we have reason to believe, so it would have been, had God been pleased with this way of worship, for he would not reject any part of religious worship merely because it had been abused by idolaters. The heathens sacrificed to idols, and yet he commands the Jews to offer sacrifices to himself, and so no doubt he would have commanded the worship of saints and angels, had he been as well pleased with this as he was with sacrifices ; had it been a more perfect state of religion than to worship God only, and without any image.

When God chose the people of Israel, and separated them from the rest of the world, to his own peculiar worship and service, we cannot suppose that he did intend to forbid any acts of worship which were a real honour to the Divine nature, much less to forbid the most excellent and perfect acts of worship ; for he who is so jealous of his glory, will no more part with it himself, than he will give it to another ; and therefore, excepting the typical nature of that dispensation, the whole intention of the Mosaical law, was to correct those abuses which the rest of the world was guilty of in their religious worship, which either respected the object or the

acts of worship ; that they worshipped that for God, which was not God ; or that they thought to honour God by such acts as were so far from being an honour, that they were a reproach to the Divine nature. And whatever is forbid in the worship of God, unless there be some mystical and typical reasons for it, must be reduced to one of those causes. This account God himself gives, why he forbids the worship of any being besides himself, or the worship of graven images : “ I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images,” Isa. xlii. 8. Whatever is his true glory, he reserves to himself, and therefore never did forbid any act of worship which was truly so ; but he will not give his glory to another, and for that reason forbids the worship of graven images, or any thing besides himself ; and if this was not his glory then, much less the most perfect and excellent part of worship, I know not how it should come to be his glory now, unless the Divine Nature changes and alters too.

So that God’s having forbid, by the law of Moses, the worship of any other being besides himself, is a very strong presumption, that the worship of saints and angels (whatever fine excuses and apologies may be made for it, yet at least) is not a more perfect state of religion, than to worship God alone. For though God may not always think fit to command the highest degrees of perfection, yet there can never be any reason to forbid it. But let us now consider the nature and reason of the thing, whether it be a more perfect state of religion to worship God alone, or, to worship saints and angels, &c. together with the supreme God. Now the perfection of any acts of religion must either respect God or ourselves ; that they signify some greater perfections in God, or more perfect attainments in us, and a nearer union and conjunction with the Deity. Let us then briefly examine the worship of saints and angels, both with respect to God and ourselves, and see whether we can discover any greater perfection in this way of worship, than in the worship of the supreme Being alone, without any rival or partner in worship ; and if it appears, that it is neither for the glory of God, nor for the happiness and perfection of those who worship, we may certainly conclude, that our Saviour has made an alteration in the object of our worship, for he made no alteration for the worse, but for the better ; he fulfils and perfects laws, which, I sup-

pose, does not signify making them less perfect than they were before.

SECT. VI.

1. THEN let us consider, whether the worship of saints and angels be more for the glory of God, than to pay all religious worship to God alone. Now, if religious worship be for the glory of God, then all religious worship is more for God's glory than a part of it; unless men will venture to say, that a part is as great as the whole. And yet whoever worships saints and angels, though he be never so devout a worshipper of God also, yet he gives part of religious worship to creatures, and therefore God cannot have the whole, unless they can divide their worship between God and creatures, and yet give the whole to God.

If it be objected, that those who worship saints and angels, do not give that worship to them, which is peculiar and appropriate to the supreme God, and therefore they reserve that worship which is due to God wholly to himself, though they pay an inferior degree of religious worship to saints and angels: I answer, What that worship is, which is peculiar to the supreme God, I shall consider more hereafter; but for the present, supposing that they give only an inferior degree of worship to creatures: is this religious worship, or is it not? If it be, is a degree of worship a part of worship? If it be, then God has not the whole, and therefore is not so much honoured, as if he had the whole; as to shew this in a plain instance.

Those who pray to saints and angels, though they do not pray to them as to the supreme God, but as to mediators and intercessors for them with the supreme God, yet they place an inferior degree of hope, and trust, and affiance in them, or else it is nonsense to pray to them at all; so that though God may be the supreme object of their reliance and hope, yet he is not the only object; he has part, and the greatest part, but not the whole, for they divide their hope and trust between God and creatures; and if it be a greater glory to God to trust wholly in him, than to trust in him in part, then it is a greater glory to God to pray to him only, than to pray also to saints and angels.

Nay it is more than probable, that those who pray to saints and angels, as trusting in their merits and intercessions for

them, do not make God, but these saints and angels to whom they pray, the supreme object of their hope. This, it may be, will be thought an extravagant charge against men who profess to believe, "That God is the supreme Lord of the world, and the sole giver of all good things;" but this is no argument to me, but that, notwithstanding this belief, they may trust more in saints and angels than in God, and consequently give the supreme worship to them. For men do not always trust most in those who have the greatest power, but in those by whose interests and intercessions they hope to obtain their desires of the sovereign power. Thus I am sure it is in the courts of earthly princes; though men know, that the king only has power to grant what they desire, yet they place more confidence in a powerful favourite than in their prince, and when they have obtained their requests, pay more solemn acknowledgments to their patron; for let the power be where it will, our hope and trust is placed there where our expectations are. And when men's expectations are not from the prince, who has the power, but from the favourite, whose interest directs the influences of this power to them, which otherwise would never have reached them, such favourites have more numerous dependants, more frequent addresses, more formal courtships, than the prince himself. And when men model the heavenly court according to the pattern of earthly courts, and expect the conveyance of the Divine blessings to them, as much from the intercession of saints and angels, as they do to obtain their desires of their prince, by the mediation of some powerful favourite, no wonder if they love, and honour, and fear, reverence and adore, trust and depend on saints and angels, as much and more than they do on the supreme God. For there is not a more natural notion, than to honour those for our gods, from whose hand we receive all good things, whether we receive them from their own inherent power, or not, *Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.*

Namque erit ille mihi semper Deus, illius aram
Sæpe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.

Men may acknowledge God to be the supreme Being, and ascribe incommunicable perfections to him, and yet may pray more frequently, more devoutly, more ardently, with greater trust and affiance to saints and angels, than to God, as it is apparent many devotees of the Virgin Mary do; and this is to

give supreme and sovereign worship to them, without acknowledging them to be supreme beings.

Indeed it is morally impossible, but our religious worship, trust, and affiance, must be at least equally shared between the supreme God and our mediator, whatever he be, as men do not less trust in the interest of their patron, than in the power of their prince; for it is not mere power, but favour, which is the immediate object of our trust; and therefore God appointed his only begotten Son to be our Mediator, as for other great and wise reasons, so to prevent idolatry, by giving us a God incarnate, who is a proper object of religious adoration, to be our Mediator, that seeing men will worship their Mediator, they may have a God for their Mediator to worship. The sum is this, If it be more for the glory of God to have all religious worship appropriated to himself, than to have only a part of it, and it may be the least share and part too, then the worship of saints and angels cannot be for God's glory.

But besides this, the worship of saints and angels, together with God, does mightily obscure and lessen the divine perfections, and therefore it cannot be for his glory. It represents him indeed like a great temporal monarch, but it does not represent him like a God.

That which we ignorantly think a piece of state and greatness in earthly monarchs, to administer the great affairs of their kingdoms, to receive petitions and addresses, to bestow favours, to administer justice by other hands, to have some great ministers and favourites to interpose between them and their subjects, is nothing else but want of power to do otherwise. He would be a much greater prince, more beloved and revered, who could do all this himself; but no prince can be present in all parts of his kingdom, nor know every particular subject, much less their particular cases and conditions, deserts and merits; and therefore is forced to divide this care into many hands, and in so doing, shares his power and honour with his subjects. But whoever imagines any such thing of God, denies his omnipresence, his omnipotence, and omniscience, and his particular care and providence over his creatures. God indeed does not always govern the world by an immediate power, but makes use both of the ministry of angels and men; but he governs all things by his immediate direction, or at least by his immediate inspection. He overlooks every thing himself, while all creatures either obey his commands, or submit to his power. If this be the true notion

of God's governing the world, that he has the concernments of the whole creation under his eye, and keeps the disposal of all things in his own hands, so that nothing can be done, but either by his order or permission; then the most perfect and glorious angels, the greatest ministers of the Divine Providence, can challenge no share in religious worship, cannot be the objects of our trust or hope, because they are only ministers of the divine will, can do nothing from themselves, as civil ministers of state, and officers of great trust can in temporal kingdoms, but are always under the eye, and always move at the command of God. In such a state of things, all the peculiar rights of sovereign power and dominion God reserves wholly to himself, as any wise prince would, among which the receiving the prayers and petitions of his creatures is none of the least; to hear prayers is made the peculiar attribute of God in Scripture, "Thou art a God that hearest prayers, therefore unto thee shall all flesh come." And reason tells us, that it is the most eminent part of sovereignty and majesty; and the reason why temporal princes do not reserve this wholly to themselves, is, because they cannot do it: but God can, and he challenges it to himself, and will not allow any creature to do it: and there is no temptation to pray to any creature, when we know that they cannot help us, that they must receive their orders and commands from God, and not act by their own will and inclinations.

Thus princes have their favourites, to whom they express a very partial fondness and respect, to whom they will deny nothing that they ask, nor hardly shew any grace or favour to their subjects without them; and this forces subjects to address themselves to their prince by them: but it is a reproach to the Divine goodness and universal providence, to conceive any such thing of God; which yet is the foundation of the worship of patron saints and angels, as persons so dear to God, that he cannot deny their requests, and will not grant our petitions without them, or at least that it is the most certain and effectual way to obtain what we desire, to offer up our prayers and petitions to God by their hands.

No doubt but all good men on earth, much more blessed saints and angels in heaven, as being more perfect and excellent creatures, are very dear to God; but yet God is not fond and partial in his kindness, as earthly princes are, but has an equal regard to all his creatures, and delights in doing good to them, and needs not to be importuned by any power-

ful favourites to hear their cries and prayers ; he will as soon attend to the prayers of an humble penitent sinner, as of the most glorious saint, and is more ready to grant than they are to ask.

A Mediator of redemption is very consistent with all the perfections of the Divine nature, and does mightily recommend both the goodness and wisdom of God to the world. When mankind had transgressed the laws of their creation, they forfeited their natural right and interest in the care and goodness of their Maker. The Divine justice, and the wisdom of God in the government of the world, required an atonement and expiation for sin ; and it was an amazing demonstration of the Divine goodness to sinners, that he found one himself, "that he gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins." When men by sin had forfeited their original innocence and happiness together, they could expect nothing from God, but by way of covenant and promise ; and every covenant between contending parties must be transacted in the hands of a mediator, and none so fit to be our mediator, as He who is our ransom too.

And a mediator must be invested with power and authority to see the terms of this covenant performed, and this is his mediatory intercession. He intercedes not merely as a powerful favourite, but as the Author and Surety of the covenant ; not merely by entreaties and prayers, but in virtue of his blood, which sealed the covenant, and made atonement and expiation for sin.

Thus Christ is our Mediator of redemption, who hath redeemed us by his blood ; and we must offer up all our prayers to God in his name and powerful intercession, because we can expect no blessings from God but by virtue of that covenant, which he purchased and sealed with his own blood.

But now a mediator of pure intercession, without regard to any atonement made for sin, or any covenant of redemption (such as saints and angels, and the blessed Virgin, are made by the Church of Rome), is a mighty reproach to the Divine nature and perfections. It clothes God with the passions and infirmities of earthly princes ; represents him as extremely fond of some of his creatures, and very regardless of others ; as if his kindness to some favourite saint were a more powerful motive to him to do good than his own love of goodness ; as if he knew not when, nor to whom to shew mercy, without their direction or counsel, or would not do it without their

importunity ; as if some of his creatures had as much the ascendant over him, as some favourites have over their princes, who can with a word's speaking have any thing of them, and extort favours from them, even against their wills and inclinations. No man can think there is any need of such intercessors and mediators with God, who believes him to be infinitely wise, and to be infinitely good ; to know when it is fit to hear and to answer, and to be always ready to do what his own wisdom judges fit to be done. There can be no place for such intercessions and entreaties to an infinitely perfect Being ; for they always suppose some great weakness or defect in him who wants them ; for even a wise and good man wants no mediators to persuade him to do that good which is fit to be done. The objection against this is very obvious, and the answer, I think, is as easy. The objection is this : If God be so good, that he needs not such prayers and intercessions, to move him to do good, why do we pray for ourselves ? Why do we pray for one another ? Why do we desire the prayers of good men here on earth ? Why is it a greater reproach to the Divine perfections to beg the prayers of St. Paul or St. Peter, now they are in heaven, than to have begged their prayers while they had been on earth ?”

To this I answer : when we pray for ourselves, I suppose, we do not pray as mediators, but as supplicants, and nothing can be more reasonable, than that those who want mercy, or any other blessing, should ask for it. It is certainly no reproach to the Divine goodness, that God makes prayer the condition of our receiving, which is a very easy condition, and very necessary to maintain a constant sense and reverence of God, and a constant dependence on him. And when we pray for one another on earth, we are as mere supplicants, as when we pray for ourselves, and to pray as supplicants is a very different thing from praying as advocates, as mediators, as patrons. The virtue of the first consists only in the power and efficacy of prayer ; the second, in the favour and interest of the person. This the Church of Rome herself owns, when she allows no mediators and advocates but saints in heaven ; which is a sign, she makes a vast difference between the prayers of saints on earth, and saints in heaven.

There are great and wise reasons, why God should command and encourage our mutual prayer for each other while we are on earth ; for this is the noblest exercise of universal love and charity, which is a necessary qualification to render

our prayers acceptable to God ; this preserves the unity of the body of Christ, which requires a sympathy and fellow-feeling of each other's sufferings ; this is the foundation of public worship, when we meet together to pray with, and for each other to our common Father ; and it gives a great reputation to virtue and religion in this world, when God hears the prayers of good men for the wicked, and removes or diverts those judgments which they were afraid of ; this becomes the wisdom of God, and is no blemish to his goodness, to dispose his mercies and favours in such a manner as may best serve the great ends of religion in this world.

God does not command us to pray for ourselves or others, because he wants our importunities and solicitations to do good : but because it serves the public ends of religion and government, and is that natural homage and worship which creatures owe to their great Creator and Benefactor, and sovereign Lord. But to imagine, that God needs advocates and mediators to solicit our cause for us in the court of heaven, where none of these ends can be served by it, this is a plain impeachment of his wisdom and goodness, as if he wanted great importunities to do good, and were more moved by a partial kindness and respect to some powerful favourites, than by the care of his creatures, or his love to goodness.

From hence it evidently appears, how inconsequent that reasoning is, from our begging the prayers of good men on earth, to prove the lawfulness of our praying to the saints in heaven to pray and intercede for us ; the first makes them our fellow-suplicants, the second makes them our mediators and intercessors ; and how little the Church of Rome gains by that distinction, between a mediator of redemption, and mediators of pure intercession ; for though they pray to saints and angels only as mediators of intercession, yet this is a real reproach to the nature and government of God ; a mediator of redemption is very consistent with the Divine glory and perfections, a mediator of pure intercession is not. And the sum of all this is, that it is so far from advancing the Divine glory to worship saints and angels together with God, that it is a real reproach and dishonour to him ; and therefore this can be no law nor institution of our Saviour, who came not to abrogate the Divine laws, but to fulfil and perfect them. Some think there is no danger of dishonouring God by that honour they give to saints and angels, because they honour them as God's friends and favourites, as those whom God has honoured

and advanced to great glory ; and therefore whatever honour they do to them, rebounds back again on God, and this may be true, while we give no honour to saints and angels, but what is consistent with the Divine glory ; but when the very nature of that honour and worship we pay to them, is a diminution of God's glory, and a reproach to his infinite perfections, as I have made it appear the worship of saints and angels is, surely it cannot be for God's glory to advance his creatures by lessening himself.

SECT. VII.

2. LET us now consider whether the worship of saints and angels together with God be a more perfect state of religion than the worship of God alone with respect to ourselves : whether it puts us into a more perfect state. It does, indeed, mightily gratify the superstition of mankind to have a multitude of advocates and mediators to address to ; but there are three considerations which may satisfy any man how far this is from a perfect state of religion.

1. That it argues very mean and low conceits of God ; for did men believe God to be so wise, so good, and so powerful, as he really is, they would be contented with one infinite God, instead of ten thousand meaner advocates. The worship of saints and angels, as I have already proved, is a great reproach to the Divine perfections, and therefore such worshippers must have very imperfect and childish apprehensions of the supreme Being, which is a plain proof what an imperfect state of religion this is ; for the perfection of religion is always proportioned to that knowledge we have of God, who is the object of it.

2. This worship of saints and angels is a very servile state : it subjects us to our fellow-creatures, who are by nature but our equals, however are not our gods. It is a state of liberty, freedom, and honour to be subject to God, who is our natural Lord and Sovereign ; but to fall down to our fellow creatures, and to worship them with divine honours, with all humility of address, and sacred and awful regards, is to debase ourselves as much below the dignity of our natures as we advance them above it. The excellency and perfection of reasonable creatures principally consists in their religion, and that is the most perfect religion which does most advance, adorn, and perfect our natures ; but it is an argument of an abject mind to be

contented to worship the most excellent creatures, which is a greater dishonour than to own the vilest slave for our prince. Mean objects of worship do more debase the soul than any other the vilest submissions; and the more our dependencies are, and the meaner they are, the more imperfect our state of religion is.

3. The greatest perfection of religion consists in the nearest and most immediate approach to God, which, I think, these men cannot pretend to who fly to the patronage and intercession of saints and angels to obtain their petitions of him. Though we should allow it lawful to pray to saints and angels to mediate for us with God, yet we cannot but own it a more perfect state to do as the saints and angels themselves do, go to God without any other advocate but Christ himself. It is a great happiness to have a friend at court, to commend us to our prince, when we have no interest of our own; but it is a greater privilege to go immediately to our prince when we please, without any favourite to introduce us. This is the perfect state of the Gospel, that we have received "the adoption of sons; and because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba Father," Gal. iv. 5, 6. That is, this Holy Spirit, which dwells in us, teaches us to call God Father, and to pray to him with the humble assurance and confidence of children. This is the effect of Christ's intercession for us, that we may now "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 16. The throne of grace certainly is not the shrine of any saints, but the immediate throne and presence of God, whither we may immediately direct our prayers through the merits and intercession of Christ. Upon the same account, the whole body of Christians are called a "spiritual house," that is, the temple of God, where he is peculiarly present to hear those prayers which are made to him, "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. And "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." This is a privilege above what the Jews enjoyed. They had a priesthood to minister in holy things, and to offer their sacrifices for them; but the whole nation was not a priesthood, nor had such immediate access to God: but now every Christian has as near an access to God as the priests themselves under the law had; can offer up his prayers and spiritual sacrifices immediately

to God, and that very acceptably too, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest and Mediator; and if our prayers be acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, we need no other mediators or advocates. This is the only direction our Saviour gave his disciples a little before his death, to ask in his name, with this promise, "If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full," John xiv. 13, 15; chap. xvi. 24. And to give them the greater assurance of acceptance, he acquaints them with God's great and tender affection for them, such as a father has for his children: "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God," John xvi. 26, 27. A reason which equally extends to all those who shall believe in Christ to the end of the world. And can we now imagine, that when our Saviour has purchased for us this liberty of access to God, he should send us round about by the shrines and altars of numerous and unknown saints to the throne of grace? When he will not assert the necessity of his own prayers for us while we pray in his name, because our heavenly Father hath such a tender affection for all the disciples of Christ, can we think it necessary to pray to St. Paul and St. Peter, and the Virgin Mary, to pray for us? This is none of our Saviour's institution; nor can it be, because Christ, by his death, and sufferings, and intercessions, brings us nearer to God, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaks, Heb. x. 19, 20, 21, 22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh, and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith." But the worship of saints and angels removes us at a great distance from God, as not daring to approach his presence without the mediation of some favourite saint; and though the Church of Rome does sometimes pray directly to God only, in the name and mediation of Christ, as the Pagans themselves sometimes did to their supreme deity, yet it seems this is what they dare not trust to, and therefore join the mediation of saints with their prayers to God, and never pray to God without it.

SECT. VIII.

3. THAT the Gospel of our Saviour has made no alteration in the object of our worship appears from that analogy which there is, and ought to be, between the Jewish and Christian worship. The Jewish and Christian Church are but one Church, and their worship the same worship, only with this difference, that the Jewish worship was in type and figure, and ceremony, the Christian worship in truth and substance; and therefore, if this legal and evangelical worship be the same, it must have the same object, for the object is the most essential part of worship.

So that if it appear, not only from the express letter of the law of Moses, but from all the types and figures of the law, that God only was to be worshipped by the Jewish Church; if Christ was to fulfil all these types and figures in his own person, and in the evangelical worship, then it is certain that the object of our worship must be the same still; for if the type was confined in its nature and signification to the worship of one God, then the whole Christian worship, which was signified and prefigured by these types, must be peculiar and appropriate to the same one supreme God.

As for instance. I have already proved at large, that the Jews were to worship but one God, because they had but one temple to worship in; and all their worship had some relation or other to this one temple, and therefore all their worship was appropriated to that one God, whose temple it was. Now we know God's dwelling in the temple at Jerusalem was only a type and figure of God's dwelling in human nature, upon which account Christ calls his body the temple; and St. John tells us that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," John ii. 19, 21; i. 14, ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, tabernacled among us, as God dwelt in the Jewish tabernacle or temple; and St. Paul adds, that "the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ bodily," Colos. ii. 9. σωματικῶς, really, substantially, as an accomplishment of God's dwelling by types and figures and shadows in the Jewish temple.

Now if all the Jewish worship was confined to the temple, or had a necessary relation to it, as I have already proved, and this temple was but a figure of the incarnation of Christ, who should dwell among us in human nature, then all the Christian worship must be offered up to God through Jesus

Christ, as all the Jewish worship was offered to God at the temple ; for Christ is the only temple (in a strict and proper sense) of the Christian Church, and therefore he alone can render all our services acceptable to God. So that God, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the only object of our worship ; and Christ, considered as God incarnate, as God dwelling in human nature, is the only temple where all our worship must be offered to God, that is, we shall find acceptance with God only in his name and mediation. We must worship none other being but only the supreme God, and that only through Jesus Christ.

Thus under the law the priests were to intercede for the people, but not without sacrifice. Their intercession was founded in making atonement and expiation for sin ; which plainly signified, that under the Gospel we can have no other mediator, but only him who expiates our sins, and intercedes in the merits of his sacrifice, who is our Priest and our Sacrifice, and therefore our Mediator, as St. John observes, 1 John ii. 1, 2, “ If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.” The law knew no such thing as a mediator of pure intercession, a mediator, who is no priest, and offers no sacrifice for us ; and therefore the Gospel allows of no such mediators neither, who mediate only by their prayers, without a sacrifice, such mediators as the Church of Rome makes of saints and angels, and the Virgin Mary ; but we have only one Mediator, a Mediator of Redemption, who has purchased us with his blood, of whom the priests under the law were types and figures.

Thus under the law, none but the high priest was to enter into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice. Now the holy of holies was a type of heaven, and therefore this plainly signified, that under the Gospel there should be but one high priest and mediator, Heb. x. 12, to offer up our prayers and supplications in heaven, he, and he only, who enters into heaven with his own blood, as the high priest went into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice. There may be a great many priests and advocates on earth to intercede for us, as there were under the law great numbers of priests, the sons of Aaron, to attend the service and ministry of the temple, but we have, and can have, but one priest and mediator in heaven.

Whoever acknowledges that the priesthood and ministry of

the law was typical of the Evangelical priesthood and worship, cannot avoid the force of this argument ; and whoever will not acknowledge this must reject most of St. Paul's Epistles, especially the Epistle to the Hebrews, which proceeds wholly upon this way of reasoning : now this manifestly justifies the worship of the Church of England, as true Christian worship ; for we worship one God through one Mediator, who offered himself a sacrifice for us, when he was on earth, and intercedes for us as our High Priest in heaven, which answers to the one temple, and the one high priest under the law : but though the Church of Rome does what we do, worship the supreme God through Jesus Christ, yet she spoils the analogy between the type and the antitype, the legal and evangelical worship, by doing more ; when she sends us to the shrines and altars of so many several saints, surely this cannot answer to that one temple at Jerusalem, where God alone was to be worshipped ; there are as many temples and mercy-seats now, as there are shrines and altars of saints and angels, by whose intercession we may obtain our requests of God. When she advances saints and angels to the office of mediators and intercessors in heaven, this contradicts the type of one high priest, who alone might enter into the holy of holies, which was a type of heaven ; for there is some difference between having one mediator in heaven (and there can be no more under the Gospel to answer to the typical high priest under the law), and having a hundred mediators in heaven together with our typical High Priest. To have a mediator of pure intercession in heaven, who never offered any sacrifice for us, cannot answer to the high priest under the law, who could not enter into the holy of holies without the blood of the sacrifice. The high priest entering but once a year into the holy of holies, which was typical of Christ's entering once into heaven to intercede for us, cannot be reconciled with a new succession of mediators as often as the Pope of Rome pleases to canonize them. So that either the law was not typical of the state of the Gospel, or the worship of saints and angels, which is so contrary to all the types and figures of the law, cannot be true Christian worship.

Sixthly, I shall add but one thing more ; that Christ and his Apostles have made no alteration in the object of worship, appears from hence, that *de facto* there is no such law in the Gospel for the worship of any other being besides the one supreme God. There is a great deal against it, as I have already shewn ; but if there had been nothing against it, it had

been argument enough against any such alteration, that there is no express positive law for it. The force of which argument does not consist merely in the silence of the Gospel, that there is nothing said for it (which the most learned advocates of the Church of Rome readily grant, and give their reasons, such as they are, why this was not done, why we are not directed to pray to saints and angels, and images, &c.), but the argument lies in this, That there can be no alteration made in the object of worship without an express law ; and therefore there is no alteration made, because there is no such law in the Gospel.

The Jews were expressly commanded to worship no other being but the Lord Jehovah, as I have proved, which law appropriates all the acts of religious worship to one God ; and therefore all those who were under the obligation of this law (as to be sure all natural Jews were), could not, without the guilt of idolatry, give any religious worship to any other being, till this law were expressly repealed, and express leave given to worship some other divine being besides the supreme God ; so that at least our Saviour himself, while he was on earth, and subject to the law, and his Apostles, and all believing Jews, were obliged by this law to worship none but God, unless we can shew where Christ by his legislative authority, or his Apostles by commission from him, have expressly repealed this law ; nay indeed, unless we can shew that Christ himself repealed this law, and taught the worship of saints and angels, the Apostles themselves could have no authority to do it, for their commission was only to teach what Christ had commanded them, Matth. xxviii. 20 ; which though it does not extend to matters of order and discipline, and the external circumstances of worship, yet it does to all the essentials of faith and worship, and I think the right object of worship is the most essential thing in religious worship.

From hence it appears, that at least all the Jewish Christians in the Apostles' days, and all succeeding ages to this day, cannot worship saints and angels without idolatry, because the law, which was given to them, and never yet repealed, commands them to worship none but God ; and if Gentile converts were received into the Jewish Christian Church (and Christ has but one Church of Jews and Gentiles), they must also be obliged by all those laws, which were then, and are still obligatory to all believing Jews ; and therefore Gentile as well as Jewish Christians, are still bound to worship none but God.

Now I think I need not prove that an express law can be repealed only by an express law. That law which commands us to worship God, and him only, must continue in full force till God do as expressly declare, that he allows us to pay some degree of religious worship to other beings besides himself: when a lawgiver has declared his will and pleasure by a law, it is not fit that subjects should be allowed to guess at his mind, and dispute away an express law by some surmises and consequences, how probable soever they may appear; for at this rate a law signifies nothing, if we may guess at the will of our lawgiver, without and against an express law. And yet none of the advocates of the Church of Rome (though they are not usually guilty of too much modesty) ever had the confidence to pretend an express law for the worship of saints and angels, and images, &c. and though they sometimes allege Scripture to prove this by, yet they do not pretend that they are direct proofs, but only attempts to prove some other doctrines from Scripture, from which they think they may prove by some probable consequences, that which the Scripture nowhere plainly teaches; nay, the contrary to which is expressly taught in Scripture. And if this may be allowed, I know no law of God so plain and express, but a witty man may find ways to escape the obligation of it. This is a consideration of great moment, and therefore I shall discourse more particularly of it.

The law of Moses expressly commands us to worship God, and him only; our Saviour owns and confirms the authority of this law in the Gospel; the Church of Rome, notwithstanding this law, gives religious worship to creatures: the question then is, how she avoids the force of this law, since it is nowhere expressly repealed, and she does not pretend that it is. Now the patrons of creature-worship think to justify themselves from the breach of this law these three ways: 1. By consequences drawn, as they pretend, from other Scripture doctrines. 2. By distinctions. And, 3. By authority. Let us then examine, whether all this have any force against an express law, which was never expressly repealed.

1. By consequences drawn, as they pretend, from other Scripture doctrines. And I shall discourse this with a particular reference to the invocation of saints. For when they would prove the lawfulness of praying to saints, they allege no direct proof of this from Scripture; but because they must make a show of saying something from Scripture, when they

are to deal with such heretics as will be satisfied with no less authority, they endeavour to prove something else from Scripture, from whence they think by an easy consequence they can prove the lawfulness of praying to saints.

Thus they very easily prove, that we may and ought to pray for one another, and to desire each other's prayers while we are on earth: and from hence they presently conclude that we may as lawfully pray to saints in heaven to pray for us, as beg and desire their prayers while they are on earth.

And to confirm this, they endeavour to prove that some extraordinary saints, whose merits are very great, do directly ascend up into heaven into the immediate presence of God, and a participation of his glory; and hence they conclude, that they have authority and power to help us and to intercede for us, and that they are so far advanced above us in this mortal state that they deserve some kind of religious honour and worship from us, as being *diï per participationem*, gods by participation, that is, by partaking in the divine nature and glory by their advancement to heaven.

And if after all this they can prove, that the saints in heaven do pray and intercede for us on earth, they think the demonstration is complete and perfect, that therefore "It is good and profitable (as the Council of Trent words it) humbly to invoke the saints after the manner of supplicants, and to fly to their prayers and help and aid to obtain blessings of God by his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our only (not Intercessor and Advocate, but) Redeemer and Saviour."*

Now how they prove all this is not my business at present to inquire; but my inquiry is, whether such arguments as these be sufficient to oppose against the authority of an express law? And if they be, truly I think it a very vain thing either for God or men to make any laws. For,

1. I desire to know what these gentlemen would prove by such kind of arguments as these. Suppose we should grant them that the saints are received into heaven before the resurrection, and are actually possessed of all that glory and

* Bonum atque utile esse suppliciter Sanctos invocare, et ob beneficia impetranda a Deo per Filium ejus Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum, qui solus noster Redemptor et Salvator est, ad eorum Orationes opem auxiliumque confugere. Concil. Trid. 16. 25. De Invocat. [Sess. xxv.] [The decree adds, illos vero qui asserunt stultum esse in cœlo regnantibus (sanctis) voce vel mente supplicare, impie sentire.]

happiness, which they say they are ; suppose we should grant them that, by some means unknown to us, saints and angels are acquainted with all that we do and suffer in this world, hear all our vocal or mental prayers, which we offer to God or to themselves, and that they do actually pray and intercede for us, what follows from hence ? That therefore we may pray to saints ? Not, I hope, if there be an express law against it. These arguments at most can only prove that in the nature of the thing, it might be fitting and reasonable to pray to saints, if God thought fit to allow it, not that we must pray to saints though God has forbid it. For those are powerful reasons indeed which can justify saint-worship against the express law and declared will of God. Could they first prove one of these three things : either, 1. That there is no such law against the worship of any other being besides God. Or, 2. That this is not the sense of this law, that they must not pray to saints or angels ; that the law, which forbids us to worship any being but God, does not forbid the worship of saints. Or, 3. That though there was such a law, and this were the sense of it, and this law were never formally repealed by God, yet it disappears of itself, and obliges no longer, since the discovery of such reasons as these for the worship of saints and angels. I say could they prove anything of this in the first place, then there would be as much reason for the worship of saints as there is strength and validity in their arguments : but no reason can take place against an express law, till it be as expressly repealed. For,

2. If an express law may be disobeyed as often as men fancy they see reason to do what the law forbids, this overthrows the whole authority of making laws, and makes every subject a judge, whether the laws of a sovereign prince shall be obeyed or not. At this rate he has the greatest authority who has the best reason ; and since every man believes his own reason to be best, every man is the sovereign lord of his own actions. It is to be presumed that no prince makes a law but what he apprehends some reason for, and to oppose any man's private reason against a law, is to set up a private man's reason against the public reason of government : and yet it is much worse to oppose our reason against a Divine law, which is to oppose the reason of creatures against the reason of God ; unless we will say that God makes laws without reason, and those that can believe that may as easily imagine that God will expect that those laws which he makes without reason

should be obeyed without reason also ; and then to be sure all their reasons cannot repeal a law nor justify them in the breach of it. It becomes every creature to believe the will of God to be the highest reason, and therefore when God has declared his will by an express law, while this law continues in force (as it must do till it be as expressly repealed), it is an impudent thing to urge our reasons against the obligations of it. So that since God has expressly forbid us to worship any being besides himself, unless we can prove that God has repealed this law, it will never justify the worship of saints and angels, though we could by the plainest and easiest arguments prove to the conviction of all mankind, that saints and angels are very fit objects of our religious worship ; and that it is no diminution to the glory of God to pay some degree of religious worship to them.

3. Especially when the matter of the law is such, that whatever reasons may be pretended on one side or other, it must still be acknowledged to be wholly at the will and pleasure of the lawgiver which side he will choose. As for instance, suppose there were no natural and necessary reason against the worship of saints and angels, yet there is no natural and necessary reason for it neither, and therefore God may either allow or forbid it as he himself pleases, without assigning any reason why he does either. And when it appears that God might forbid it if he pleases, and that he has actually forbid it by an express law, it is time to leave off reasoning about it. Natural reason can give no assurance of any thing which it cannot prove to be necessary ; whatever in the nature and reason of things may be or may not be, can never be proved either to be or not to be by mere reason ; for it is a contradiction to say that there is no necessary reason why such a thing should be, and yet that I can prove by reason that it must be which supposes that there is a necessary reason why it should be ; for I cannot prove that it must be, unless I can prove that it must necessarily be ; that is, that there is a necessary reason why it should be.

To apply this then to our present case. The law expressly forbids us to worship any other being besides the supreme God ; the Church of Rome prays to saints and angels and images, which is an essential part of divine worship ; and without ever attempting to prove this law to be repealed, she justifies her worship by such reasons and consequences as I have now cited from their most celebrated doctors, and some

of which are the principles whereon the Council of Trent founds their praying to saints and angels. I ask then, whether these arguments, whereby they endeavour to justify the worship of saints and angels, prove that we must worship them, that such worship is their natural right, and our duty. No, this the Church of Rome will not own; the most the Council of Trent says, is, that it is *bonum et utile*, good and profitable, to do it; but, say I, if they do not prove it to be necessary, they do nothing; for if saints and angels have not a natural right to our worship, though we should suppose them to be very fit objects of some degrees of worship, yet it is at God's choice whether he will allow it or not, and they can challenge no worship, and we must give none, if God forbids it; and therefore since God has forbid the worship of any being but himself (and therefore of the most excellent saints and angels) by an express law; and it nowhere appears where or when, or in what manner this law was repealed; a hundred such arguments as these cannot prove it lawful to worship saints and angels against an express law not to do it. Though we should grant that God, if he pleased, might allow us to worship saints and angels, as the Church of Rome does, without any diminution of his own glory, which is the most that all their arguments can pretend to prove, yet it does not hence follow that we may worship them, when God by an express law has declared that he will not allow it. No arguments nor consequences can prove that God allows us to do that which by an express law he has forbid us to do. No reason can prove that to be God's will, which he has publicly declared in his law to be against his will.

4. That no reason or arguments can absolve us from our obedience to an express law till it be as expressly repealed, appears from this, that our obligation to obedience does not depend merely upon the reason of the law, but upon the authority of the lawgiver; and therefore though the reason of the law should cease, yet while it is enforced by the same authority, it obliges still. Thus I am sure it is in human laws, and it is very fitting it should be so; mere reason cannot make a law, for then everything which is reasonable would be a necessary duty; that which is reasonable may be fit matter for a law, but it is the authority of the lawgiver which makes the law; and the same authority which at first made it a law, continues it to be a law while the authority lasts, though the particular reason for which it was enacted into a law may cease.

So that though the Church of Rome could prove that there is no reason now against the worship of saints and angels, that all those reasons for which God forbade the Jews to worship any one but himself, were now ceased; yet till the law be repealed too, it is utterly unlawful to worship any being besides the supreme God; and yet this is the most that all their reasonings come to, that there is not the same reason for this law under the state of the Gospel, that there was under the Jewish economy.

They suppose that God forbade the Jews to worship any one but himself, because they were in great danger of falling into Pagan idolatries, and worshipping the gods of the Egyptians, and other neighbouring nations; and that this was the case also of the Christian Church at the first planting of the Gospel; but now there is no danger of worshipping false gods, we may very securely worship the friends and favourites of God.

They suppose that all the ancient patriarchs who lived before the resurrection of Christ were not received into heaven; and therefore not being in a state of bliss and glory themselves, were not yet capable of divine honours, could neither know our prayers nor intercede for us. But now at least some eminent saints and martyrs ascend directly into heaven, and are the *Beati*, advanced to such a state of happiness and glory, that they are fit objects of religious worship, and are so powerful in the court of heaven, that God denies them nothing which they ask; and so tender and compassionate to us that they readily undertake our cause and intercede for us; and therefore it is very good and profitable now to invoke their aid and assistance by solemn and devout prayers.

Now though the learnedst men among them are put to miserable shifts to prove the least part of all this, yet let us for argument sake, suppose all this to be true, that things are mightily changed since the making of this law, and that there is not the same reason now to confine all religious worship to God alone that there was in the time of Moses. What follows from hence? That therefore we must now worship saints and angels, notwithstanding this law which forbids it? By no means, unless they can prove that the law is repealed too, as well as the reason ceased: here is the authority of the law-giver still, though we should suppose that we had lost the reason of the law; till the law is as expressly repealed as it was given, it is God's will still, and that is reason enough to bind the law upon us, though other reasons fail. The reason (if

we speak of such reasons as these which the Church of Rome assigns for it, is a different case, if we speak of eternal and necessary reason, which is nothing else but the eternal and immutable nature and will of God, which is an eternal law) did not make the law, and the change of the reason cannot repeal it. And since we see that God has not repealed this law, we rather ought to conclude that we are mistaken in the reasons for which God made this law, or that there are other reasons which we know not of, for which he continues it: we may indeed reasonably suppose that God will repeal a law, when the reason for which it was given ceases, though earthly princes may not always do so; but still the law binds till it be repealed; and it is more reasonable to conclude that the reason of the law continues while we see God does not repeal it, than first to persuade ourselves that the reason of the law is changed, and thence infer the repeal and abrogation of the law when we see no such thing done.

5. That these arguments which the Roman doctors urge to justify their worship of saints and angels, are of no force to repeal that law, which forbids the worship of any other being besides the supreme God, appears from this, that they had no force in them to prevent the making of this law, and therefore much less can they repeal it now it is made. The reasons which they urge had the same force then which they have now; and if, notwithstanding all these reasons, God thought fit to forbid the worship of all created beings, it is ridiculous to imagine that these reasons should supersede the obligation of that law, which is made in contradiction to all such reasonings. As to shew this briefly.

They prove that we may pray to saints and angels to pray for us, because we may desire good men on earth to pray for us. Now suppose we could not assign the difference between praying to saints in heaven, and desiring the prayers of saints on earth, yet I would desire to know, whether good men did not pray for one another, and desire each other's prayers, before and after God gave this law on Mount Sinai, which forbids the religious worship and invocation of any other being but himself. If good men did in all ages pray for one another, and desire one another's prayers, and God allowed and approved of this, then it seems God did not think this a good reason for praying to saints and angels in heaven, because good men might beg each other's prayers on earth; for if he had, he would not have made that law, which forbids such a religious

invocation of any creature. And if, notwithstanding this reason, which had as much force then as it has now, God made and promulgated this law, this reason can never repeal it, nor dissolve the obligation of it.

Thus if the saints and angels being in heaven, be a good reason why they should be worshipped, this was a good reason at the beginning of the law, as it is now ; for though we should suppose, with the Church of Rome, that saints departed were not in heaven then, yet certainly the angels were ; and if their being in heaven made them fit objects of our worship, why did God so expressly forbid it ? and if he forbade it then, when there was as much reason to allow the worship of those heavenly inhabitants as there is now, this argument cannot prove but that God forbids it still.

The same may be said of the intercession of saints and angels. The Papists suppose that the saints and angels pray and intercede for us in heaven, and obtain for and convey many blessings to us, and therefore it is good and profitable to pray to them, and to fly to their patronage ; now though indeed they date the intercession of saints (as they do their admission into heaven) from the resurrection of our Saviour, yet there is as much evidence for the aids and intercessions of angels before and under the law, as there is now ; nay, I think somewhat more ; for the government of the world was much more under the administration of angels in the time of the law than it is now ; and yet, notwithstanding this, God did by an express law forbid the worship of any being but himself ; and therefore of these angelical powers, who are somewhat superior to saints in heaven ; and if this were no good reason against making this law, it can be no good reason to prove the abrogation of it.

2. The next way they take to evade the obligation of this law of worshipping God only, is by distinctions. As to name the chief of them.

They tell us, that this law is only opposed to the worship of false gods, such gods as the heathens worshipped, not to the worship of saints and angels, who are the friends and favourites of God.

And then they distinguish about the nature of worship ; they confess there is a worship that is peculiar to God, supreme and sovereign worship, which is peculiar to the Supreme Being, and this, for what reason I know not, they call *Latria* ; but then there is an inferior degree of worship, which they call

Dulia, which may be given to excellent creatures, to saints and angels, who reign with Christ in heaven.

They farther distinguish between absolute and relative worship. Absolute worship is, when we worship a being for itself, and thus God only is to be worshipped: but relative worship is, when we worship one being out of respect to another; and thus we may worship saints and angels upon account of their relation to God.

Now I shall have occasion to examine these distinctions more particularly hereafter; my business at present is to examine, how far these distinctions can justify the worship of saints and angels against an express law, which commands us to worship God only. And I have three things to say on this argument: 1. That the letter of the law will admit of no such distinctions as these. 2. That the Scripture no where allows of any such distinctions. And, 3. That no distinctions can justify our acting against the letter of a law, which have not the same authority which the law has.

1. The letter of the law will admit of no such distinctions as these. The law is, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me," Exod. xx. The explication of this law is, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name," Deut. x. 20. Or, as our Saviour expounds it, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matth. iv. 10.

Now these words do plainly exclude the worship of all other beings besides the supreme God. They exclude indeed the worship of all the heathen gods, which were at that time worshipped in the world, but they are not confined to the worship of the heathen gods, nor merely to the worship of those gods, who were at that time worshipped, but should any new god start up in after ages, whether among Jews or Christians, the words extend to all that are, and all that ever shall be worshipped. "Thou shalt have none other gods before me," signifies, that we must worship no other being but the supreme God; for to have a god, is to give religious worship to some being; as appears from that exposition, which both Moses and our Saviour Christ gives of it, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." For it is impossible to have any god besides the supreme God, in any other sense than as we worship some other being, besides the supreme God, with divine honours; and whatever being we so worship, becomes our god; and therefore this law forbids the

worship of any being which is not God, be it saint or angel, or the Virgin Mary; how excellent and perfect creatures soever they be, they are not our God, and therefore must not be worshipped. If we must worship, and serve God only, as our Saviour expressly tells us, and that we must worship no creature whatever it be, the worship of saints and angels is as expressly forbid by this law as the worship of the heathen gods; for that law which commands us to worship God only, excludes the worship of all creatures, whatever they be.

But may not the meaning of this law be only this, that we must not give supreme and sovereign worship to any other being but the supreme God, but we may give an inferior degree of worship to some excellent spirits, who under God have the care of us? And is not this plainly signified in the very letter of the law, when it says, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me?" For no other worship makes any being a god but that which is supreme and sovereign, peculiar and appropriate to the one supreme God; and therefore not to have any other being for our god, is not to give supreme and sovereign worship to it. Now what that worship is, which is peculiar and appropriate to the supreme God, I shall discourse particularly in the second part; our present inquiry is, whether this law makes any such distinction? The law says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Here is no distinction between supreme and subordinate worship; whatever is an act of worship must be given to God only. But the law says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and therefore it must signify supreme and sovereign worship, for no other degree of worship makes a god. Did the heathens then worship no inferior gods? Did those who worshipped so many several gods, look upon them all as supreme and absolute? Or, were they so senseless as to give supreme and sovereign worship to inferior deities? Or, does not this law forbid the worship of those gods whom the heathens worshipped as inferior demons, but only the worship of those gods whom they accounted supreme and sovereign? If this law forbids the worship of all heathen gods; and it is certain that they worshipped a great many gods, whom they did not account supreme, then there can be no place for this distinction here; for such an inferior worship as makes an inferior god, is as well forbid, as supreme and sovereign worship.

The law says, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me;" or besides me: which, as I observed before, does not ex-

clude the worship of the supreme God, but forbids the worship of any other being together with him. The meaning is not, Thou shalt not renounce my worship for the worship of any other gods, but, Thou shalt worship me, and no other god besides me. Now I would only ask this question, whether a Jew who worshipped the God of Israel, who declared himself to be the supreme God, could give supreme worship to any other god? This is contrary to the sense of all mankind, to worship him as supreme whom they do not believe to be supreme. And therefore when God forbade them to join the worship of any other gods with the worship of himself, he must forbid all kinds and degrees of worship, even the most inferior worship, which the heathens paid to their inferior deities.

If you say, that God did indeed forbid all kinds and degrees of worship to be paid to the heathen gods, which were impure and wicked spirits; but still it is lawful to pay an inferior worship to saints and angels, who are the friends of God: I answer, the law makes no distinction between the worship of good and bad spirits, and therefore as far as this law is concerned, we must either deny this inferior worship to all, or grant it to all. If this law does not forbid giving inferior degrees of worship to other beings, then it does not forbid the inferior worship of heathen gods; that may be faulty upon other accounts, but is no breach of this law, and then the heathens were not guilty of idolatry in worshipping their inferior demons with an inferior worship. If this law does forbid even this inferior degree of worship, then it forbids the worship of good spirits too, though with an inferior worship, which transforms true saints and angels into false and fictitious deities.

But I have another argument to prove, that this law can have no respect to the different degrees of worship. The Roman doctors themselves grant, that the difference between supreme and subordinate or inferior worship, does not consist in the outward act, for that all or most of the external acts of worship may belong to both kinds, they except indeed sacrifice, but contrary to the sense of all men; for the heathens offered sacrifice to their inferior deities, as well as to the supreme; and there is no imaginable reason to be assigned, why sacrifice, as well as prayer, may not be an act of inferior as well as of supreme worship. The difference then between supreme and inferior worship is only in the intention and devotion of the worshippers, and no man can by the external act know whether this be supreme or inferior worship. Now from hence I thus

argue : if the worship forbidden by this law be such as can be known by the external act, then this law can have no regard to the degrees of worship, for the degrees of worship are not in the external act, but in the mind of the worshipper, which cannot be known by external acts. Now that the law did forbid the external acts of worship, without any regard to the intention of the worshipper, appears in this, that this idolatrous worship was to be punished with death, Deut. xiii. 6, 7, &c. and therefore it must be such external idolatry as falls under the cognizance of human judicatures. Had there been any regard to the degrees of worship, no man could have been convicted of idolatry by the external act, and could not have been liable to punishment, unless he had confessed his intention of giving supreme worship to a false god ; and so this law of putting such idolaters to death, had signified nothing, because it had been impossible for them to convict any man of idolatry, but by his own confession ; but when the external act, which is visible to all men, is sufficient to convict any man of idolatry, it is next to a demonstration, that the law had no respect to the degrees, but to the acts of worship.

And that our Saviour in that law, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,” had no regard to the different degrees of worship, I have already proved at large ; for allowing that distinction, he had not given a good answer to the devil’s temptation.

Thus as for their distinction between absolute and relative worship, that though we must not worship any creature, the most excellent saints and angels, for themselves, yet we may worship them upon account of that relation they have to God ; that is, we may worship them for God’s sake, though not for their own ; I find no intimation of any such distinction in the law. We there are commanded to have no other gods, to worship God and him only, which excludes saints and angels from being the object of our worship, as well as devils.

2. But possibly it may be said, that though the law takes no notice of such distinctions, yet the Scripture in the explication of this law, may make many allowances for it. Now, in answer to this, I only desire to know, where the Scripture has made any such distinction between worshipping good and evil spirits, the enemies and rivals, or the friends of God, between supreme and subordinate, absolute or relative worship ? I can find no such distinctions in Scripture, and I have a material reason to believe no such can be found, *viz.* because

there was no occasion for them. The Scripture no where allows us to give any kind of worship to any creature, and therefore there was no need to distinguish between the kinds and degrees of worship.

The most material thing that can be said in this cause is this : that when the Scripture mentions this law of worshipping one God, it opposes it to the worship of the false gods of the heathens (Deut. vi. 13, 14. chap. xiii. 7), from whence some may conclude, that God forbade the worship only of these false gods. But we must consider, that the law is conceived in such general terms, as to exclude the worship of all beings besides the supreme God ; but it could not be thought, that God should at that time immediately apply this law against the worship of any other beings, but those which were at that time worshipped in the world. If God gives a law which forbids the worship of all beings besides himself ; and particularly applies this law to prohibit the worship of all those gods which were then worshipped in the world, will any one in their wits hence conclude, that if the folly and superstition of men should set up a new race and generation of gods in after ages, that the worship of these new gods is not as well forbidden by this general law, as the worship of those gods which were worshipped at that time when this law was given ? If this were true, possibly Pagan Rome itself was not guilty of idolatry ; for most, if not all their gods, might be of later date than the giving of the law.

3. Now since no such distinctions as these appear in Scripture, it is impossible they should justify the worship of saints and angels, which is so expressly forbidden by the law, if we will acknowledge them to be distinct beings from the supreme God ; for if they are not the supreme God, we must not worship them, for we must worship none but God. No distinctions can justify us in this case, but such as God himself makes ; for otherwise it were easy to distinguish away any law of God. Human laws will admit of no distinctions but such as they make themselves ; for a distinction does either confine and straiten, or enlarge the law ; and he who has power to distinguish upon a law, has so far power to make it. If the law says, that we shall worship no other being besides God, and we have power, if we have but wit enough to invent some new distinctions, between the worship of good and bad spirits, between supreme and subordinate, absolute and relative worship, this makes a new law of it : for it is one thing to

say, "Thou shalt worship God only," and quite contrary to say, "Thou shalt worship God only and good spirits ; God with a supreme and absolute, good spirits with a subordinate and relative worship." This, I think, is sufficient to shew, that we must admit of no distinctions upon a Divine law, but what the Scripture itself owns : and therefore since those distinctions, with which the Church of Rome justifies her worship of saints and angels, are no where to be found in Scripture, they have no authority against an express law.

4. The next course the Papists take to justify their creature-worship, in contradiction to that law, which expressly commands us to worship none but God, is an appeal to such authorities, as they think sufficient to decide this matter.

Now I shall not say much to this, for I believe all mankind will acknowledge, that no authority less than Divine, can repeal a Divine law ; and therefore, unless God himself, or such persons as act by a Divine authority, have repealed this law, no other authority can do it. That Christ and his Apostles have not repealed this law, I have already proved ; that the whole Church in after ages had any authority to repeal this law, I desire them to prove.

For the authority of the Church, as to the essentials of faith and worship, is not the authority of lawgivers, but of witnesses. The Church never pretended, in former ages, to make or to repeal any Divine laws, but to declare and testify what the belief and practice of the Primitive and Apostolic Churches was ; and it is unreasonable to think, that they should have any such authority ; for then Christ and his Apostles preached the Gospel to little purpose, if it were in the power of the Church to make a new Gospel of it when they pleased.

But indeed could it appear, that the Apostles did teach the Christians of that age, and the Church in those ages which immediately succeeded the Apostles did practise the worship of saints and angels, we should have reason to suspect, that we, and not they, are mistaken in the sense of that law, which commands us to worship none but God.

But then none can be admitted as competent witnesses of this matter, but those who did immediately succeed the Apostles, or conversed with Apostolical men and Churches. And thanks be to God, there is no appearance of creature-worship in those ages ; we dare appeal to the testimony of Fathers and Councils for above 300 years ; and those who come after, come a little too late to be witnesses of what was

done in the Apostolic Churches ; especially when all the intermediate ages knew nothing of it. I shall not fill up this discourse with particular citations, which learned men know where to find ; since the Roman doctors can find nothing in the writings of the first Fathers to justify the worship of saints and angels ; and the Protestant writers find a great deal in those ages against it.

Indeed at the latter end of the fourth century, some of the Fathers used some rhetorical apostrophes to the saints and martyrs in their orations, which the Church of Rome interprets to be prayers to them ;* but though other learned men have vindicated those passages so far, as to shew the vast difference between them, and solemn and formal invocations, which is not my business at this time, yet there are several things very well worth our observation towards the true stating of this matter. As,

1. That these Fathers came too late to be witnesses of the Apostolical practice, which they could know no otherwise than we might know it, if there had been any such thing, *viz.* by the testimony and practice of the Church, from the Apostles till that time : this was no where pretended by them, that the invocation of saints had been the practice of the catholic Church in all ages, and they could have no proof of this, unless they had better records of former times than we have at this day, and such as contradicted all the records which we now have of the Apostolic and Primitive Churches ; and I believe few men will be so hardy as to assert this ; and methinks there should be as few who are so credulous as to believe it ; and I am sure there is no man living who is able to prove it.

2. Nay, the particular sayings of these Fathers, by which the Romanists prove the invocation of saints, do not prove that it was the judgment and practice of the Church of that age. They no where say that it was ; and it does not appear to be so by any other records. Let them shew me any Council before, or in those times when these Fathers lived, that is, in the fourth century, which decreed the worship of saints and angels. Let them produce any public offices of religion in those days, which allow this worship ; and if no such thing appears, those men must be very well prepared to believe this, who will, without any other evidence, judge of the practice of the Church, only from some extravagant flight of poets and

* See Bishop Usher's Answer to the Jesuit's Challenge.

orators : and if, even in those days, the worship of saints was not received into the public offices of the Church, methinks we may as well live without it still, and they must either grant that these Fathers, whose authority they allege, meant no such thing by these rhetorical flourishes, as they extract out of them, or else that they introduced a new and unknown worship into the Christian Church ; and then let them prove, that some few Fathers of the fourth century, without the public authority of the Church, had authority enough of their own to change the object of worship, contrary, as the Church in former ages believed, to an express Divine law, which commands us to worship none but God.

3. Nay, I further observe, that these Fathers, whose authority is urged for the invocation of saints by the Church of Rome, do no where dogmatically and positively assert the lawfulness of praying to saints and angels, and many Fathers of the same age do positively deny the lawfulness of it ; which is a plain argument, that it was not the judgment and practice of the Church in that age, and a good reasonable presumption that these Fathers never intended any such thing in what they said, how liable soever their words may be to be expounded to such a sense.

Gregory Nazianzen, indeed, in his book against Julian the Apostate, speaks to the soul of Constantius in this manner ; “Hear, O thou soul of great Constantius (if thou hast any sense of these things),” &c. But will you call this a prayer to Constantius ? Does this Father any where assert in plain terms, that it is lawful to pray to saints departed ? A hundred such sayings as these, which are no prayers to saints, cannot prove the lawfulness of praying to saints against the constant doctrine of the Fathers of that age. Thus, in his funeral oration for his sister Gorgonia,* he bespeaks her to this purpose, “that if she knew what he was now a doing, and if holy souls did receive this favour from God to know such matters as these, that then she would kindly accept that oration which he had made in her praise, instead of other funeral obsequies.” Is this a prayer to Gorgonia to intercede for him with God ? By no means ! He only desires if she heard what he said of her (which he was not sure she did), that she would take it kindly. Whereas in that very age,

* Greg. Naz. Orat. 2. [11.] in Gorg. [vol. 1. p. 190. Par. 1630.]

the Fathers asserted,* “that we must pray only to God;” and therefore they define prayer by its relation to God; “that prayer is a request of some good things, made by devout souls to God; that it is a conference with God; that it is a request offered with supplication to God.” Which is a very imperfect definition of prayer, were it lawful to pray to any other being besides God.

St. Austin tells us,† that when the names of the martyrs were rehearsed in their public liturgies, “it was not to invoke them, or pray to them, but only for an honourable remembrance;” nay, he expressly tells us, “that the worship of dead men must be no part of our religion; for if they were pious men, they do not desire this kind of honour, but would have us worship God: *Honorandi ergo sunt propter imitationem, non adorandi propter religionem;*”‡ they are to be honoured for our imitation, not to be adored with an act of religion.

The Council of Laodicea condemned the worship of angels; and so does Theodoret, Œcumenius, and others of that age. It is notoriously known, that the Arians were condemned as guilty of idolatry for worshipping Christ, whom they would not own to be the true God, though they owned him to be far exalted above all saints and angels, and to be as like to God as it is possible for any creature to be: and those who upon these principles, condemned the worship of the most perfect and excellent creature, could never allow the worship of saints and angels.

So that though the worship of saints and angels did begin about this time to creep into the Church, yet it was opposed by these pious and learned Fathers, and condemned in the first and smallest appearances of it; which shews that this was no catholic doctrine and practice in that age, much less that it had been so from the Apostles; and I think, after this time, there was no authority in the Church to alter the object of worship, nor to justify such an innovation as the worship of saints and angels, in opposition to the express law of God.

* Basil. Orat. in Jul. [Προσευχὴ ἐστὶν αἰτησις ἀγαθοῦ παρὰ τῶν ἐνσεβῶν εἰς Θεὸν γινομένη. Hom. in Mart. Julit. p. 49. vol. ii. Par. 1839.] Martyr. Greg. Naz. Orat. 1. de Oratione. [Ibid. p. 1.] Chrys. in Genes. Homil. 30. [Ἡ γὰρ εὐχὴ διάλεξις ἐστὶ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, p. 351. vol. iv. Paris, 1835.]

† Aug. De Civit. Dei, l. 22. cap. 10. [p. 1073. vol. vii. Paris, 1838.]

‡ Idem de Vera Religione, cap. 55. [p. 1267. N. 112. vol. i. Par. 1836.]

The sum of this argument is this: since there is an express law against the worship of any other being besides the supreme God, the Lord Jehovah, which never was expressly repealed, whatever plausible reasons may be urged for the worship of saints and angels, they cannot justify us in acting contrary to an express law of God.

A DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE NATURE OF IDOLATRY :

IN WHICH THE CHARGE OF IDOLATRY IS MADE GOOD
AGAINST THOSE OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

THE PREFACE.

WERE we to judge of the merits of a book merely by the good opinion which the author seems to have of it, we might reasonably believe that the Discourse concerning the Nature of Idolatry, which I am about to consider, was not only set forth in defence of a truly infallible Church, but that the author of it thought himself delivering nothing but oracles all the while he was composing of it.

If his reasons had borne proportion to the nature of his attempt, we should easily have forgiven him, or rather we should have thanked him, no less than the gentlemen of the Roman communion would have done in such a case. He does indeed treat men with contempt, whom all the world knows to be above his contempt; nor can I believe him to be so singular as not to know it himself; but yet had he reasoned well, we had yielded to him; for an overbearing spirit in an adversary neither makes us to submit to a bad argument, nor to resist a good one.

It seemed something strange, that that author should think to trample upon us now, for pretending that the Church of Rome has defined transubstantiation as it is understood by us; and that she has established an idolatrous worship in her communion: for not only the greatest persons of the Reformed religion have brought this charge against her, but to the truth of it himself has subscribed in his time. But it was much more amazing to find so new a confidence supported by argu-

ments so weak, that it is not without reason that some of the Roman communion are said to complain "that they have been betrayed, rather than defended by him."

How unsuccessfully he has managed his design of expounding transubstantiation, has been shewn in a late Discourse, proving transubstantiation to be the peculiar doctrine of the Church of Rome, and in the Preface to the Examination of the New Articles of the Roman Creed by Catholic Tradition. If I make it appear that he has miscarried as much in the point of idolatry, his theological part will then be considered; and for the rest, we do not by any means presume to meddle with it.

As for the subject which I have undertaken, one would have thought that a man who resolved to despise all that had ever written upon it, and not according to his opinion, should have taken care, if not to produce something that could not be answered, yet at least not to offer any thing that had been already confuted.

But on the contrary, this author, after all his noise, has for the most part been only an humble transcriber of the old exploded pretences; and which I may truly say, were much more strongly, as well as more modestly urged by Dr. Godden against his learned adversary. And when I consider how much more roughly this author uses him, than that doctor did, I am apt to think it might in some measure proceed from the sense he had, that Dr. St. in discovering the sophistry of his old antagonist, had beforehand confuted whatever this new one could find out again to revive the controversy.

And for this, I shall leave the following Discourse to be my evidence; and of which I shall say no more here, than that in his own phrase, p. 135, "I have delivered my judgment, as I will answer for my integrity to God and the world." But now there is another thing, which I ought not in this place to pass by. It has been insinuated by this hot reasoner, as no small crime in us, that we charge the Church of Rome with idolatry: "Not only (says he, p. 72, 73) because of the falseness of the calumny, but the barbarous consequence that may follow upon it, to incite and warrant the rabble, whenever opportunity favours, to destroy the Roman Catholics and their images, as the Israelites were commanded to destroy the Canaanites and their idols." And in p. 73, 74, he tells us, "that this charge of idolatry has ever been set up as the standard against monarchy."

There are many more passages of the like kind, in which he exercises his gift of eloquence: for I dare say he never learnt it, unless he has in his time studied to imitate a tempest; for I know not what other original he could propound to himself. This style is the fittest in the world to his purpose, and will perhaps be a copy for the future to them that intend to speak neither according to charity nor truth, which are ever best heard in a calm.

But however, if this too were for the declaration of his judgment, we will no more complain of the violence of his expressions, than we do of the force of his arguments: only I would beg leave to say, that he should have been sure he could discharge the Church of Rome of that guilt, before he had fixed a mark of calumny upon the whole body of the Reformed, who accuse them of it: lest when men examine his proofs, and find them defective, they be tempted to retort the censure, especially considering with what freedom and violence he has been pleased to lay it upon us.

But now for his great fear that this should incite the rabble to any violence against those of the other communion, I dare venture to say, there is not the least reason to be at all apprehensive of it. He knows very well, how free the Christians of the first three centuries were in laying the very same charge against the Gentile world; and yet we do not find that they ever shewed themselves either the less obedient to their emperors, or less charitable to their neighbours, upon the account of it. And though I am verily persuaded that the Romanists, in the invocation of saints, and in the worship of images and relics and of the host, are guilty of idolatry; yet I thank God, I am not conscious to myself of one disloyal thought to my king, or of the least uncharitableness towards any of my countrymen, who differ from me in these particulars.

And what I can thus truly profess in my own behalf, I doubt not but I may do for all others the true and genuine members of the Church of England; and who, by being such, must, I am sure, by principle, be both obedient subjects and charitable Christians. As for this author, he has made as broad a sign that he intends to leave us, by insinuating that the charge of idolatry ought to be followed with blows, as by his concern not to have idolatry charged upon the Church of Rome. We who do protest against certain practices as idolatrous, do also protest against violating either loyalty or charity, upon the account of religion. This author, it seems,

likes us neither upon one account, nor the other; or this at least is to be said, that he has been thus long of our communion, and has not all this while understood what we teach concerning a Christian's duty to his neighbour.

Did we indeed profess that of idolatry, which some others do of heresy, that it is a sufficient ground for the excommunicating of a king, and absolving his subjects of their allegiance; had we ever been caught, not in Otesian conspiracies, but in real plots against our sovereign upon this account, there might then have been just cause for such an insinuation. But whilst our principles are so loyal, that we have even been laughed at for our asserting them, and that too by some of those who would now be thought so zealous for their prince's safety; it was a very unreasonable apprehension, to think that the charge of idolatry (and that too begun in the time of a prince, of whom it was misprision of treason but to say that he was guilty of it) should in the bottom have been the design against the monarchy, which we have so often declared, and in the very person of our present king have shewn, we think ourselves obliged to support, whatever his religion be who is to sit upon the throne.

And for what concerns our brethren of the Roman communion, it is well known, that we are not of those who destroy men for conscience-sake. We have never been infamous either for Parisian massacres, or military conversions. They are others who have ruined at once both the churches and the servants of the living God, out of zeal for their religion. We have indeed taken care to remove the idols out of our Israel; but for the worshippers of them, if they have suffered any thing, it has not been for their idolatry, but for that which shews there is something else more dangerous to the English monarchy than this charge.

The truth is, when I consider how heinous a suggestion this is, and what little foundation there is, either from our principles or our practices, to support it, I am under some temptation to reply to this author, as an ancient Father once did to a heathen, who accused them of such cruelties and filthiness in their ceremonies, as none but themselves were capable of committing: "*Nemo hoc potest credere, nisi qui possit audere.*"*

And this I hope may serve for my excuse, if I have at this time appeared in defence of a charge, in which every true

* Minut. Felix. Oct. p. 34.

member of the Church of England is so highly concerned ; and for which all orders and degrees among us have been so contemptuously exploded by this author. Or if I must still be content to bear the censure of such as he, I shall at least comfort myself in this, that I can fall under no reproach, but what must at the same time reflect upon all the great names of the Primitive Christian Church : with whom I had rather suffer the angry reflections of a few of our own communion, than flourish with them, and gain their applauses.

To say the truth, when such learned defenders of our Church are struck at, and that in so impetuous a manner, as that most deservedly esteemed person he has so often mentioned, and I think never without something to raise his repute amongst honest and judicious men ; I should be even ashamed not to be ill-spoken of by such a one at the same time, if I had had the honour of his acquaintance.

As for what concerns the charge itself, I shall leave it to any one to judge whether, if the Roman Church be indeed guilty of what we say it is, we can discharge our duty either towards God or our neighbour, as we ought to do, without endeavouring to convince them of their danger. And when others are so zealous for the reputation of a few men, "whose breath is in their nostrils" (p. 80), sure we may be excused if we express some jealousy for the honour of that God who has made both them and us.

It is indeed a most deplorable spectacle to consider whither blind superstition, and a zeal not according to understanding, has been able to carry otherwise good and pious men. Nor is it the least of my wonder, to consider persons whose learning I admire, and whose sincerity I am unwilling to question, yet either by the prejudice of education, or by some other causes to me unknown, so biassed in their affections to the grossest errors that the most plain and convincing arguments have not been able to prevail upon them.

It is hardly to be believed, but that they are themselves the publishers of their own doings, that in the clear light of Christianity, men should be so blind as to contend for giving religious worship to their fellow-creatures, and set up senseless images to be joined in the very same act of divine adoration with the great God, the Creator of heaven and earth.* And I would to God their impiety had stopped here ; but indeed

* Vasquez in 3 Part. D. Th. q. 25. Disp. 110.

it has gone much farther ; they have found out ways, how not only all other things, animate and inanimate, may be warrantably adored with divine adoration, but even the devil himself be worshipped without sin, by virtue of a good intention to honour God, and not certainly knowing it to be the devil. And if we may believe a man in his own case, one of them once went much farther : he made no scruple to worship the devil, whom he knew to be so, and that without taking any care (for ought appears by his relation) to terminate his worship finally upon God. And because it is indeed a singular instance, to shew to what extravagance such principles as we oppose are apt to carry indiscreet votaries, I will, to avoid all suspicion of falsehood, give you a short account of it in his own words.

Father Gauffre * being sent for to exorcise a terrible devil called Arfata, which was got into the foot of Sister Bonaventure, a nun, she earnestly prayed him that he would confess her ; for, as the Father observes, the devil had a particular desire to speak to him. After some discourse had passed betwixt them, and they began to understand one another a little better, “ I threw myself (says the Father) upon my knees before him, telling him that my design was to confound my pride by that of the devil’s, and to learn humility of them that had none. The devil, enraged to see me in that posture, told me that he had received a command to prevent me. But when I continued, for all that, to humble myself before him, he thought to take advantage of it, and told me, ‘Thou doest this to adore me.’ I replied, Villain, thou art too infamous, I consider thee as the creature of my God, and the object of his wrath, and therefore I will submit myself to thee, though thou dost not deserve it : and for that very reason I will immediately kiss thy feet. The devil, surprised at this action, hindered me. Upon which I conjured him to tell me, as far as he could guess at it, what the will of God was, whether that I should kiss his feet or he mine ? He answered, ‘Thou knowest what motion God gives thee ; follow that.’ Immediately I threw myself upon the ground and kissed his feet : at which he was in a rage ; and then I commanded him, by the

* Recit veritable de ce qui s’est fait et passé dans Exorcismes de plusieurs Religieuses de la Ville de Louciers, en Presence de Monsieur le Penitentier d’Evreux, et de Monsieur le Gauffre, p. 30, 31. This book was printed at Paris, anno 1643, with permission.

relics of Father Bernard, to kiss mine ; which he did accordingly with great readiness. After this I continued upon my knees before him for about half a quarter of an hour."

And now when these things are publicly taught and done in the Roman Church, is it not high time for us to speak, and to assert the honour of God, and the purity of his religion? Shall others, without scruple, maintain and propagate their errors; and shall it be a crime in us, even when attacked in the most violent manner, to defend the truth? Nay, but let God be served, though all the world be dissatisfied.

In the meantime, whilst forced by these considerations to assert our religion, we pursue these examinations, be it your parts (for whose sake we principally labour) to encourage our endeavours by a firm adherence to that form of sacred doctrine which you have received. As you have hitherto maintained an unproveable zeal for your profession, so go on more and more to "contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints," Jude ver. 3. And above all, be careful to adorn your holy religion with a suitable practice, "that they may be ashamed, who falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ," 1 Pet. iii. 16. "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," chap. ii. 15. Let the same mind be in us, which was also in those primitive Christians before-mentioned. Let us boldly assert the truth, as those who know what account they are one day to give unto God for it; but let us also be charitable towards our neighbours, Matth. v. 44. And if they will rather be esteemed our enemies, let us remember that even under that name we are yet to love them. Let us still be careful to maintain the character of the best subjects, as we have long asserted the most loyal principles; that as the prosperity of our king makes up a considerable part of our daily prayers, so by a sincere discharge of all humble obedience towards him, he may be convinced of the malice of those who would insinuate any false suggestions against us; and effectually see that, excepting only our duty towards God, we are much more forward and ready to do his Majesty effectual service, than any man can be, whose loyalty is not supported by religion.

CHAP. I.

In which the charge of Idolatry, which we bring against those of the Church of Rome, is freed from those odious imputations that have been of late suggested against it.

It may possibly appear to some not a little surprising, that a Church which makes no scruple of practising what is idolatrous, should yet be so very unwilling to lie under the imputation of it : there is nothing in all our disputes with those of the other communion, which they would be thought so highly to resent as this : the very mention of it has seemed to scandalize them ; and if heat and confidence could have borne us down, they had long since effectually delivered themselves from all suspicion of it.

It is not my business to inquire into the reasons of this proceeding, and which, when duly considered, will be found to have nothing in it but what is exceeding natural. Men are always more forward to do ill things than to avow them, or to own them under their proper names : “Idolatry,” says our author, “is a scandalous charge.” By his leave the charge is not always scandalous, though the crime be ever so, and the charge reputed scandalous by them who are charged with it. Though a Church that does countenance the commission of it, may by subtle arguments and bold denials keep up its reputation well enough amongst those who are resolved at any rate to believe her, yet it were impossible she should long support her interest, should she freely avow the doing of it.

But of all the methods that have been made use of to put a stop to this charge, there has been none so surprising as what this author has here found out ; and could he but have made it good, I am persuaded there would not have been any more effectual. He represents it as inconsistent, not only with the principles of charity towards our neighbour, but even of loyalty towards our prince, p. 71, &c. And makes the very mention of it to be little less than a setting up of the standard against monarchy, p. 74. And yet he is not so unacquainted with the principles and dispositions of those of the Church of England, as not to know that next to our solicitude for the honour of God, there are no two things in the world we value ourselves more upon than that character we have so justly obtained, of teaching the best measures both of duty to our

king, and of love and kindness and charity towards one another.

I must therefore, before I proceed to vindicate our notion of idolatry, first say somewhat to remove this great prejudice that has been offered against it : and this I shall do,

I. *By considering upon what weak grounds this author has undertaken to insinuate these crimes against us.*

II. *By shewing what horrible consequences would follow from it, should what he pretends indeed be true.*

I. *Of the weak grounds upon which he has undertaken to insinuate such things against us.*

Now all that he has to say for this odious charge, if taken out of his turbulent and declamatory style, is but this (pp. 71, 72, 73.) : “That idolatry is a sin very heinous to God, and which he therefore, under the law, commanded to be punished with death.” This is the sum of what he has dilated upon in three whole pages ; and against this I have many things to except. For,

1. What if idolatry be a damnable sin, may we not therefore say without uncharitableness, that those are guilty of it, whom we effectually prove to be so ? Must we therefore become men’s enemies because we tell them the truth ? I am sure a very little charity would have taught him to have made a better conclusion ; nor can I imagine what greater instance of my affection I could shew my best friend, if I saw him in such a course, as I thought would render him eternally miserable, than to tell him freely of the danger of his sin, and press him with the best reasons I had to persuade him to forsake it.

It may be he will say, he does not deny but that we may charge men with great sins, provided that they be truly guilty of them : but yet that the heinousness of this crime should make us careful not to do it, but upon very good grounds ; for to this purpose I find he sometimes expresses himself : “So black a crime as this (says he, p. 73.) is not lightly to be charged on any party of Christians.” And again (p. 73), “Before so bloody an indictment be preferred against the greatest party of Christendom, the nature of the thing ought to be very well understood.” And if this be all he means we readily acknowledge the reasonableness of it : but then he ought not to fly out into such tragical common-places against us, for charging the Church of Rome with idolatry ; but to come close to the point, and shew that we have not sufficient

grounds for what we do, (p. 70, 71.) If those whom we accuse of this crime be indeed innocent of it, whether God had commanded idolaters to be stoned under the law, or not, we could not justify our charging of them with it: but if our arguments do prove them guilty, the heinousness of the sin, and the danger of it, may be a good motive to dispose them seriously to weigh our allegations, but I am sure it can lay no obligation upon us not to impute it to them.

2. As to the other insinuation (p. 71), "That God commanded idolaters under the law to be put to death:" and for proof of which, we have two long passages transcribed out of Exodus and Deuteronomy: what would he infer from it? Would he prove to us, that therefore they ought to be put to death by us under the Gospel too? Does he look upon these precepts as obligatory to us now? If so, I dare be bold to say, he has done more in one single page, to stir up the people against the Romanists and their images (p. 72, 73), than all those popular divines he so complains of, in all the books they have ever written upon this subject. And yet this must be his meaning, if it has any meaning at all. For to examine this matter a little more closely: "God (he says) commanded the Israelites in Deut. xiii. 6—10: 'If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, &c. thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither shall thine eye pity him; but thou shalt surely kill him: thine hand shalt be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones that he die.' " Now either he looks upon this precept as still in force, and would hereby insinuate to the people, that it is their duty, if they think the Romanists guilty of idolatry, utterly to destroy them; and this is certainly one of the most seditious, as well as one of the most false suggestions in the world; or if he does not believe this command obligatory to us now, nor would insinuate any such thing by the repetition of it, what impertinence must it be to say, that we cannot in charity charge the Church of Rome with idolatry, because God commanded heretofore under the law, that all those that were guilty of it should be put to death.

But though these kind of precepts do not oblige us now, yet may not such a charge be apt to stir up the deluded rabble to think so (p. 72); and so upon occasion encourage

them to destroy the Roman Catholics and their images, as the Israelites were commanded to destroy the Canaanites and their idols? Answer, Yes; provided there were but a few such orators as himself among them, to fill their heads with such notions as these, and never tell them the impertinence of them. For instance: that these were only the political laws of the Jews, and therefore can no more warrant us now to do any violence to our neighbour, upon any such pretence, than because the Jews were commanded to do no work upon the Sabbath day, Numb. xv. 32, &c. we may therefore lawfully stone any one we see gathering a few sticks upon it. But if the question be, Whether the charge of idolatry, as it is managed by us against the Church of Rome, may not be apt to cause any such mischief? I say, it is not; and that for these reasons: For,

1. Let him examine all our books of controversy, and see if he can find any of these old laws produced, much less insisted upon and enforced by us, to mislead the people into such desperate mistakes: on the contrary, we take all occasions to declare to them, that no pretences of this kind can warrant us so much as to withdraw our affection from those who differ from us: that the Jews indeed esteemed themselves allowed to hate their enemies, Matth. v. 43, &c. that is, those who were not of the same religion with themselves, but worshipped other gods; and more especially those Canaanites, whom we are told it pleased God to destroy from off the face of the earth for their idolatry, (p. 72.) But that our Saviour Christ has utterly forbid us to make any such distinction, Matth. v. 44: "I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you." We set before them the examples of the primitive Christians; with what charity they behaved themselves towards the Gentiles among whom they lived; with what an humble obedience they submitted themselves to their idolatrous emperors,* and underwent the most cruel persecutions for their religion's sake, even when they had power sufficient to have asserted their faith, and to have destroyed both the idolaters and their idols together. And by these maxims we exhort them to walk; and according to these it is that we both now do, and I am persuaded shall always behave ourselves with all Christian charity towards

* Tertul. Apol.

those of the Roman communion, notwithstanding we both believe them to be guilty of idolatry, and charge them accordingly. But,

2. We do not only tell them, that those kind of laws are now no longer in force, and that therefore we may not by virtue of them presume to run into any violence against our brethren: but we teach them moreover (what yet more shews the impertinent malice of his suggestion), that they never were intended, even under the Jewish state, to be in force against such idolaters as they of the Church of Rome are. It is manifest to every one that has impartially considered the notion of idolatry, in the Old Testament, that there were two very different kinds of it: 1. One whereby they totally apostatized from the law, to worship other gods than the God of Israel; as when it is said that they fell off to worship strange gods; *i. e.* they renounced the religion established by the law of Moses, and took in another religion, with all the ceremonies and sacrifices belonging to it, as the Egyptian, Canaanitish, or Chaldean: and such as these were concluded under the sentence of the law before-mentioned. 2. But then another sort of idolatry there was, in which they still pretended to adhere to the law of Moses, and worship the God of Israel, but yet after an idolatrous manner, as when Jeroboam set up the two calves in Dan and Bethel; parallel to which is that idolatry with which we charge those of the other communion at this day. Now in this case, though we find the Prophets severely exclaiming against their new altars, yet we do not meet with any enforcement of this precept for putting such idolaters to death, or that they are any where charged as guilty of it upon this account.

In short, he that would know how innocent this charge is, of any of those ill consequences that are here brought against it, need only look back to the state of the Church in the days of Constantine: there he will find our primitive Fathers freely accusing the Arians of idolatry, and sometimes warm enough too in their disputes against them: but yet I believe all the records of those times will not furnish this author with so much as one instance of any bishop that ever put the emperor in mind of this law against them; or so much as insinuated to him, that he might warrantably destroy them out of his dominions for their idolatry. And sure our behaviour towards those of the Church of Rome, has not been so different from what theirs was against the Arians, that any such violence

should be feared from us now, as was never so much as urged by the hottest opposers of idolatry in those days.

But, 2ndly, If there be then no good grounds for such insinuations as these, which he has here offered only to render our charge of idolatry odious, I am sure there is cause enough upon other accounts, to make them justly be detested by all good men.

For, 1. Not to say anything of the sad consequences that may arise from hence, should such insinuations as these ever be able to gain so much credit with his sacred Majesty, as to make him entertain that ill opinion of us and our religion, as we should justly deserve, were we such as we are here represented to be: can anything be more desperate, than to impeach at once the whole body of a great and orthodox Church, of holding principles so inhuman (p. 73), "As to outdo the very cannibals themselves; and for which they have no other grounds than the rude and rash assertions of some popular divines, that have no other measure of truth or zeal, but hatred to Popery. In short, of maintaining fanatic pretences, and such as have ever been set up as a standard against monarchy." What is this but, in other words, to say, that all the orders and degrees of men amongst us, that have ever been concerned in charging the Church of Rome with idolatry, our princes and our nobles, the houses of parliament and convocation, as many as concurred either to the approving or subscribing the Book of Homilies, or to the establishing or the obeying of the laws made in the last reign, not to say anything of those learned men who have from time to time written expressly on this subject, were all in plain terms, neither better nor worse than a pack of unlearned, cruel, barbarous, cannibal, fanatical, antimonarchical villains.

Certainly a man had need have either a very good cause, or a very hard forehead, that can have the confidence to pronounce such a sentence as this, and of which I will say in his own words (p. 73), "That how inconsistent soever idolatry may be with salvation, I fear so uncharitable a calumny can be of no less damnable consequences." But, however,

2. To allow this great author to take any liberty he pleases with us: what shall we say as to the primitive Christians, whose examples we follow, by whose principles we manage this whole controversy, and with whom therefore we must either stand or fall. Were all they a parcel of seditious fellows too? It cannot be denied, but that those holy men very

freely charged the Gentiles first, and then the heretical Christians, the Arians, and others, with idolatry. And the passages of those writers, Justin Martyr, Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, Greg. Nazianzen, Epiphanius, Theodoret, and others, have been too often alleged to need a repetition here. And which ought not to be forgot, at the time that they did this, the emperors were themselves of that very religion which they so accused. Now then, according to this learned gentleman, all these holy bishops and martyrs were even as bad as we: and antiquity has been so sottish as to celebrate the praises, and recommend to us the examples of a long series of factious fanatics, who for their rudeness to their emperors, and cannibal uncharitable censures of their brethren, justly deserved all the torments and persecutions that they underwent. But,

3. Because those that pretend the highest regard to the authority of the Fathers, can yet easily except against it, when they are pressed with it, what will this author say to that of the Apostles? It cannot reasonably be doubted, but that St. Paul very well understood the true nature of charity, who so often and earnestly recommended it to his disciples; and that he was no friend to any seditious and antimonarchical principles, I believe his thirteenth chapter to the Romans will sufficiently demonstrate. Yet behold this very St. Paul charging the emperor's religion as idolatrous, exhorting all men to forsake it as such, and going up and down in all parts, preaching wherever he came against it, on this account. And I desire this gentleman to consider with himself what he can say in defence of this holy Apostle, that shall not vindicate us too.

So that now then upon the whole it appears, that out of an over-eager desire to traduce us, this judicious author has in his heat exposed all the Christians of the first three hundred years, the catholics of the following centuries, nay, the blessed Apostles themselves, besides the whole body of the Reformed religion in this and the last age, as the worst of monsters, and such as deserve to be esteemed any thing rather than Christians.

Let those, whose cause he has so unfortunately undertaken consider this, and I am persuaded they will begin to grow ashamed of their advocate. And how unjust soever they may esteem our charge of idolatry, yet they will not say it is such as cannot be maintained against them, without inspiring us at

the same time with all the horrible impulses of cruelty and barbarity against themselves, and of faction and rebellion against the government, which some men would insinuate.

As for ourselves, we earnestly beseech all those of the Church of Rome, against whom we at any time advance this imputation, that they will as candidly consider our arguments as we can truly profess they are charitably proposed by us; and whether they shall remain satisfied or not that there is reason in our charge, yet to give us so much credit with them at least, as to believe that we think there is, and shall be heartily glad to be convinced that we were mistaken in our opinion.

CHAP. II.

In which this Author's true and only notion of Idolatry is considered, and the Method laid down for a more particular Examination of it.

I WILL now take it for granted, that under the shelter of so great an authority as I have shewn to be equally concerned with us, in all the scandalous imputations that can be raised against our charging those of the Church of Rome with idolatry, I may venture to search a little more particularly into the nature of it, without being thought either a cannibal or a fanatic (p. 73, 74), or to have any design of "setting up a standard against the monarchy" for my so doing; especially considering that I resolve not to encounter any Church or party of men in the world on this occasion, but merely to shew that this man's notion of idolatry, though set off with such assurance as few writers have ever equalled, is yet, after all, so far from being supported either by Scripture or antiquity, that it is indeed utterly repugnant to both. And therefore that the Church of Rome is only vindicated by him from the charge of an idolatry that no man ever produced against her; but for such idolatry as we accuse her of, she may still fall under the weight of that, for any thing that has here been offered to the contrary.

According to this author, idolatry is neither more nor less than this: "The worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the

moon, and the stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity, as the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead."

From whence it follows, that to make a man an idolater, these three things are required.

I. *That he cast off all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead.*

II. *That he believe there is no other supreme God than either the sun, moon, or stars, or some other the like visible and corporeal parts of the world.*

III. *That in pursuance of this apprehension, he worship these visible and corporeal deities as the supreme God.*

Now to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead, and to believe no other supreme God but some visible and corporeal part of the world, in opposition to a spiritual and invisible Godhead, is, I think, to be an atheist, though here is much ado to describe him; for to believe none but a visible God, in opposition to an invisible one, and to believe none but a corporeal God, in opposition to a spiritual God, is to believe no God at all; unless a man can suppose a supreme God, without understanding, or any perfection whatsoever of a spiritual and invisible nature.

By consequence, for a man with these apprehensions to worship this God which he has made to himself, is not well capable of any other construction, than that he takes some pains, and goes a little way about to expose all religion and worship to contempt.

I would be very glad to understand our author's notion of idolatry; and therefore if it were possible, I should be content that his idolater should not be an atheist for a while, that we might see what else we can make of him. For a man to take nothing else for the supreme God, but a certain visible being, from which he shuts out all apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead, is certainly to be a downright atheist, though his atheism might have been described in fewer words. And yet on the other side, to worship something in good earnest as the supreme God, seems to imply that a man is not an atheist: for an atheist is one that doth not so much as believe there is a supreme God. But he surely believes a God who worships any thing for the supreme God, whatever that be which he so worships.

Now if Thomas Aquinas were here, it would strangely per-

plex him to clear this matter. I do not mean, to make good sense of the words, for that I take to be impossible, but to tell us by the words what the author's drift should be. For they make up a nonsense so very stiff, that it will not bend one way or the other. And if I must understand something by every word that he says, I can have no more notion of his idolatry than I have of nothing. And if he had said, "Idolatry is neither more nor less than nothing," I had been as much edified as I am now. Unless he would give us to understand, that idolatry is mere speculative madness, which nobody that has common sense and understanding can possibly be guilty of.

For all that part of the world that either is or ought to be out of Bethlehem and the like hospitals, do by the supreme God understand something at least, that is not only able to help or to hinder, but knows also when to do one and the other, and is willing to do accordingly. And therefore to worship any thing as the supreme God, and at the same time to "exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible God-head," is to worship a thing because I am sure it knows something, while I take care to be as sure at the same time that it knows nothing at all. I can compare this to nothing, as I have already intimated, but to some extraordinary instance of madness. For instance, if I should ever see a man fall down upon his knees, and seem in good earnest to ask blessing of a post, and to call it Father, I should presently think of this author's idolater; for his idolater is rather more than less mad than he that fancies a post to be his father. For men in their wits have at least as high an opinion of what they take to be their supreme God as they have of their parents: and therefore to worship that as the supreme God, which no less wants the perfections of a spiritual and invisible nature than a post does, is a misfortune that cannot light upon any body but a madman.

So that our author's idolater is a man, whom either all the world must acknowledge to be out of his wits, or if you put him into his wits, he is a mere atheist; though I am confident he would not have described himself so wittily as this author has described him.

This notion of idolatry is to me so monstrous a notion, that I am apt to look again and again into the book, to see if the words be there in which he has delivered it. But when at last I find that they are undoubtedly there, I am taken with a new fear, that the author did not mean what he says; and

therefore that I do not understand his meaning, though I understand the meaning of his words.

In such a case as this, I have nothing to do, but to take another notion of idolatry ; which, though it be not the true and only notion of it, has yet plain sense, and comes as near to his, as a notion that has sense can come to one that has none. And it is this, That idolatry is the worship of the sun, moon, or stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity, as the supreme God, not so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead ; but so as to suppose that as they are visible beings, so they have invisible natures too, and some spiritual perfections, which are indeed proper to the true God.

Now this notion of idolatry is, in one part of it, quite contrary to our author's. For they who worship any visible deity as the supreme God, with this persuasion, that it has indeed spiritual and invisible perfections, do not thereby "exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead," because they have the sense of such a Godhead in the notion of that very thing which they worship. But though this is not the idolatry which this book speaks of, yet, as I said, it is the likeliest to it that I can think of. And if he does not mean what his book says, it is a hundred to one but he means this.

But if I should be mistaken, it is no great matter ; for if I can but shew that this is not the only notion of idolatry, it follows out of hand, that the notion of his book cannot possibly be so neither : so that one way or other I am sure to reach him, whether he and his book have one meaning or two.

1. According to this notion then, those who retain the "sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead," though they do worship the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, but this only as inferior and subordinate deities, cannot be idolaters. And therefore if the Gentiles, the Egyptians, for instance, or the Chaldeans, did believe one supreme God, and worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, upon the account of those celestial spirits they supposed to reside in them, this worship was not idolatrous.

In like manner, those Gentiles that worshipped any corporeal deity, or any thing visible or invisible besides the supreme God, if they believed all the while that it was not the supreme God, and did not worship it as such, they I say could not be idolaters. And therefore I think if the Gentiles were idolaters in worshipping any of their deities, it must be because they

had no knowledge of the true God. So that either St. Paul, or this author, was out in the true and only notion of idolatry. For though St. Paul accused the Gentiles of idolatry, yet he confessed that they knew God: "For," says he, "though they knew God, they glorified him not as God," Rom. i.

2. If we do but interpret the cautions of the New Testament against idolatry, by our author's notion of idolatry, they will be paraphrased so as I believe they never were done before his time, and I suppose will never be after it. For instance: when St. Paul said to the Corinthian Christians, "My dearly beloved, flee from idolatry;" this was as much as if he had said, "My dearly beloved, idolatry being neither more nor less than the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, the stars, or any other visible or corporeal deity as the supreme God, I entreat and earnestly require you to flee from idolatry. And therefore, though I do not bid you worship the heavenly bodies, or their images upon earth, yet I strictly charge you, not to worship them as the supreme God, or as if there were not an invisible God above them all, if ever you should find it convenient to worship the sun, or moon, or stars, or any representation of them here below."

This would be an admirable paraphrase, and which I doubt not but our author would be able to make good against all those that "neither do, nor can, nor ought to understand" these things. But whether our nobility and men of quality are willing to come into this number, I think I need not say.

3. But because to created beings he afterwards adds mortal ones, of which more hereafter, I suppose he means, reasonable beings, let us see how things will go upon these new terms. "Dearly beloved, if ever you should worship Saturn or Jupiter, or such like men who died long since, still remember that they were once visible and mortal men, and have a care not to worship them as the supreme God."

I mention here only dead heathens, there being yet no Christian heroes in St. Paul's time, to whom any such worship was given, nor for some ages after. Now I think this will pass as little as the other with men that ought and do understand. For besides the barbarous stuff which this notion makes the Apostle to speak, it presses a mere monster upon us: that the Apostle supposes it utterly impossible for a Christian that does not at once renounce his whole faith and profession, to be guilty of idolatry. St. Paul certainly was a very deep man in hiding his purpose, if by entreating the

Christians to "flee from idolatry," he meant no other thing, than that they should not take and worship the sun, or the moon, or some dead man, as the supreme God. And our author is as deep a man in finding out this hidden purpose of the Apostle, which, till he arose, no man was ever so happy as to do.

But indeed with all his rhetoric he will never make himself and the Apostle of one mind in this matter. For thus St. Paul goes on: "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?" Now if they who partake in idolatrous sacrifices are idolaters; and if idolaters have no sense of a supreme God, above the pretended deities to whom they offer, they will not, I conceive, care one jot whether they partake of the Lord's table or not, nor be concerned about the Lord's jealousy at all. And yet St. Paul plainly supposes, that if Christians should be guilty of idolatry, they would yet probably be concerned about God's jealousy, and desire to partake of the Lord's table.

Thus when the same Apostle wrote to the very same persons, "not to keep company, no not so much as to eat with one called a brother, if he were a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard:" I cannot but wonder what an idolater has to do in this company, if this author's idolater and St. Paul's idolater were the same idolater. For whatsoever the fornicator, or covetous, or railer, or drunkard, might pretend to for a title to brotherhood, I am yet certain, that he is fallen even from all right to that name, who worships the sun (for instance) as the supreme God, and so renounces God the Maker of the world, and the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Paul speaks of his idolater as one within the Church, and one of those wicked persons that were to be cast out of the civil, as well as the religious communion of it. But if there be no idolater besides this author's idolater, who has renounced the Maker of heaven and earth, and lost all apprehension of him, he has prevented the Apostle's direction, and is out of the Church by his own act.

4. These things do, I confess, give me a great prejudice against this author's true and only notion of idolatry. And there is one thing which I believe will make him less fond of it himself, when he comes to consider it; and that is, that his notion does by no means suit with the sense of that

Church, to which he designed a good turn in all this. It is very well known, how the Fathers of Trent, to vindicate their worship of images from being parallel to what the Gentiles heretofore paid to theirs, did among other differences, lay down this for one: "That they do not believe any divinity or virtue to be in them, for which they ought to be worshipped." For to believe this, their catechism tells us, is to make the images become idols, and by consequence, the worship of them to be idolatry. Now if it be idolatry to worship images with such an opinion, then it cannot be the only notion of idolatry to worship the sun, moon, or stars, or any corporeal deity, as the supreme God, or their images as the images of a pretended supreme God: for without any thing of all this, one may believe divinity and virtue to be in images, and worship them upon that account.

For example: the heathens had a mighty opinion of Æsculapius after his death, that in his temples, and by his images, he could cure diseases. Let us suppose now a person to fall down and worship one of these images, in hopes of some divine virtue coming thence. Were this worship idolatry or not? If it were not, then was the Council of Trent to blame to make this an instance of the Gentiles' idolatry; if it were, then in the opinion of the Roman Church, the account of idolatry which the author has given, cannot be the only notion of it: for this was neither the worshipping of any corporeal deity, as the supreme God, nor of any corporeal image of the supreme God.

Lastly, in all the accounts which the missionaries of the Church of Rome have given us of the heathen nations where they have come, we find them generally acknowledging a supreme, spiritual, and invisible Godhead. And that if they worship the sun, moon, or stars, it is not that they esteem them to be mere visible and corporeal deities, much less think them to be the "supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible God above them;" but they worship them either as inferior deities, to whom God has committed the government of the world under him; or they look upon God to be the soul of the world, and that therefore the parts of it deserve honour upon that account: or finally, they esteem God to be of so great perfection and excellency, that he is above their service, and that therefore they ought to pay their external adoration to somewhat below him. Now I shall leave it to this author, to consider upon what grounds,

according to his true and only notion of idolatry, he will charge those men with this guilt ; or if out of his great charity he shall think fit generously to acquit them of it, I will then send him to some of his friends of the Roman communion for better instruction.

These, and many other reasons that I might add, occur to me upon the very first view only, to make me suspect his hypothesis. But now when I examine it more particularly, I find it yet more gross and unreasonable. The sum of what he offers for it is an historical deduction of the state of idolatry in the Old Testament, compared with the accounts that are given of the idolatry of the ancient, especially the Eastern nations (p. 99, 100), “who acknowledge no other deities but the stars, among whom the sun was supreme.” In opposition to which false principle, Rabbi Maimon says, “God enacted the law of Moses.” And according to this law it appears, p. 80, 81, “That idolatry is giving the worship of the supreme God to any created, corporeal, or visible deity, or any thing that can be represented by an image, which nothing but corporeal beings can ; and to suppose such a being the supreme deity, is the only true and proper idolatry.”

In opposition to which positive conclusion, I will content myself at present to say, that there is not one word of truth in it ; for that neither was the religion of the Eastern nations such as he pretends, nor the nature of idolatry under the law what he represents it to have been. And to the end I may plainly clear this whole matter, I will distinctly shew three things.

First, That the idolatry of those nations whom he mentions, the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Arabians, &c. did not consist in worshipping the sun, moon, and stars, as the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead. Nor therefore,

Secondly, Was this the only idolatry forbidden to the Jews by the law. But,

Thirdly, That as the Jews, retaining both the apprehension and worship of the God of Israel, were yet guilty of idolatry for worshipping him after a Gentile manner, so may Christians be now.

And therefore, that the Church of Rome may justly be charged by us as idolatrous, though we do not pretend in any wise to say that she worships sun, moon and stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity as the supreme God ; or that

she has lost all apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead.

And thus having established the true notion of idolatry, I shall last of all consider such objections as may be necessary to be replied to for the clearing of it; and so leave the particular charges to be made good by those who shall have occasion so to do.

CHAP. III.

Of the idolatry of the ancient heathens; especially of the Chaldeans, Egyptians, and Persians; and that it did not consist in their worshipping the sun, moon, and stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity as the supreme God; so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead.

THIS is the fundamental mistake of our author concerning his notion of idolatry; and which being overthrown, his whole hypothesis built upon it must fall together with it. For thus it is that he argues (p. 80), "God designed by his law to preserve the Jews from falling into the idolatry of the nations round about them: against this we find not only all its precepts (p. 102), but even the rites and ceremonies of it, to have been directed. But the idolatry of those nations was no other than the worship of the sun, moon, and stars (p. 97, 100), or of some the like visible and corporeal deities, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead. And therefore this must be the true and only notion of it in the Old Testament."

I shall hereafter more fully shew the weakness of this proof, when I come to demonstrate, that there were two sorts of idolatry mentioned in those holy Scriptures, extremely different the one from the other. And therefore that though this were the true notion of idolatry in one respect, yet it would not follow that it was the only notion, by reason of the other. And this I shall do in the next chapter. My business at present is to shew, that what he has thus confidently laid down, is so far from being the only notion of idolatry, that it is indeed no notion of it at all; for that those very heathens whom

he insists upon for his warrant in this matter, were not guilty of such an idolatry as he pretends they were.

We have already seen his definition of idolatry (p. 74), that it is neither more nor less than this: "The worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity, as the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead." This (he pretends) is the only Scripture notion of it. "And thus (he says, p. 99.) all learned men of all nations, all religions, ever understood the old notion of idolatry, till this last age, when folly and passion cast it at anything that peevish men were angry with. So Rabbi Maimon, the most learned and judicious of the Jewish doctors, discourses at large, p. 100. That the ancient idolatry was nothing but the religion of the Eastern nations, who acknowledge no other deities but the stars, among whom the sun was supreme." And then he immediately subjoins, p. *ibid.* "That the ancient heathens worshipped only the stars, without any notion of heroes or demons." So Diodorus Siculus says of the Egyptians; Herodotus of the Persians and Chaldeans; Strabo and Justin of the Arabians; and Cæsar of the Germans, p. 101. He confesses indeed, that there was another sort of idolatry introduced afterwards, the worship of men and women; but "this he takes to have been much more modern, and a mere invention of the vain and lying Greeks; but that whensoever it came in, it was grafted upon the old stock, of giving the worship of the supreme God, not only to created, but to mortal beings." So this author. To which I reply:

I. That as to this latter sort of idolatry, seeing he has declined the consideration of it, as being of too young a date to found the Scripture-notion of idolatry upon it, I shall not insist upon it; though I am by no means satisfied, either in his account of its antiquity, or that it was a mere invention of the vain and lying Greeks. For,

1. It has been the opinion of very learned men, that this kind of idolatry was practised in Egypt soon after the flood.* And that the most ancient Osiris, was no other than Mizraim, the son of Cham, whom they worshipped together with his father, and from whom the whole country is in Scripture called by his name. In the cvth Psalm, ver. 23, it is expressly termed the land of Cham. And Plutarch informs us,† that in the

* See Vossius de Idol. L. 1. c. 27. [p. 74. Amstel. 1700.]

† Plutarch. de Iside et Osiride.

sacred rites of Isis, they call it *Xημία*, very probably upon the same account. And that which makes this the more likely, is, that in the division of the world among the sons of Noah, Gen. x. Arabia fell to the lot of Cham, and in that Cush his eldest son fixed himself, from whence the country is called the land of Cush, in 2 Kings xix. 9. And then it may easily be conceived that his second son Mizraim should go into the next adjoining country, the land of Egypt. Now if this be so, then it follows, not only that this sort of idolatry was much more ancient than is pretended; but that being practised in Egypt before the children of Israel's going down thither, it may be reasonably enough allowed a sufficient antiquity for us to derive something from it of the notion of idolatry, with reference to the times under debate. But,

Secondly, As to the very Apis itself, the chief deity of the Egyptians, and whom our author contends to have been the sun (p. 89), it is not improbable, but that they meant no other than the Patriarch Joseph by it; and whom they honoured with divine honours, upon the account of his wonderful preservation of them in the seven years' famine, Gen. xli. Thus Julius Firmicus expressly interprets it,* and what is more adds, that this was according to the manner of their country: "The Egyptians (says he) after his death, according to the appointment of their country, built temples to him." And again, "this man is worshipped in Egypt, he is adored," &c. To him Ruffinus† agrees; and St. Augustine, or whoever else was the author of that book under his name, *De Mirabilibus Scripturæ*, informs us, "That the Egyptians upon this account, set up the symbol of an ox over the sepulchre of Joseph, in memory of their deliverance." Thus Suidas§ interprets their Serapis; who, as Clemens Alexandrinus‡ (out of Aristeas) tells us, was the same with Apis; and both Suidas, Ruffinus, and Julius Firmicus add, That his statue was set up with a bushel upon his head, to denote the plenty of corn which he provided for them. And in the very Scripture itself, Joseph is either called, or at least compared to an ox, Deut. xxxiii. 17. And some of the Rabbins have given this account of the very calves of Jeroboam, that they were the symbols of Joseph, set up by him in honour of his ancestors, from a part of whose tribe, viz. that of Ephraim, he was himself descended.

* Jul. Firm. p. 17, 18. [p. 289. Wirceb. 1783.]

† Ruffin. l. 2. Hist. Eccles. c. 23.

§ Suidas in voce Σάραπις.

‡ Cl. Alex. στρωμ. 1. [p. 383. Venet. 1757.]

Here it were an easy matter to multiply proofs upon this occasion, to shew that the idolatry of consecrating heroes into gods, and worshipping them as such, is by no means of so fresh a date as this author would have it thought to be. For what he adds (p. 101), "That whensoever it came in, it was grafted upon the old stock of giving the worship of the supreme God, not only to created, but to mortal beings;" I answer,

1. That this is evidently contrary to all the accounts we have of their worship; and according to which it appears, that the heathens paid no other worship to their *Divi*, or deified men, than what the Church of Rome at this day does to her saints; but as carefully distinguished between the adoration of the supreme God and these heroes, as the other do between him and those blessed men that reign together with him, as their language tells us.

2. Whenever this idolatry came in, it is evident that the very nature of it utterly overthrows his only notion of idolatry before laid down, unless he supposes that they thought their heroes, whom whilst they lived they knew to be but men, born into the world after the common order of nature, and even dying after the same manner as all others, became after death the supreme God that made heaven and earth; and believed all this so firmly, as not only to give the worship of the supreme God to them, but to exclude all sense and apprehension of any God above them. For so (he says) a man must do, before he can be guilty of idolatry.

Now if this be his opinion, I would then ask this learned antiquary one small question: seeing the number of their heroes was very great, whom the same persons at the same time worshipped; did they believe every one of these to be the supreme God that made heaven and earth, and give the highest divine honour accordingly unto every one of them as such? That they did this, no man of sense will either say or believe; and yet if they did not, the true and only notion of idolatry is at an end; for whichever of their heroes they believed to be the supreme God, and worshipped as such, they must have adored the rest only as inferior deities, and with an honour suitable to their apprehensions of them.

Either therefore he must quit his true and only notion of idolatry, which he tell us, is neither more nor less than, "the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity, as the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual

and invisible Godhead ;” or he must give us some assurance, that the Egyptians (for instance) worshipping of Joseph under the symbol of an ox, did believe him to be the supreme Deity, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of any superior Godhead, and did worship him accordingly ; that is, that those men were so sottish as to think, that a man who had lived and died amongst them, was the great God that framed the world, and all things in it, many ages before himself had any being.

II. To come to the other, and (as he supposes) the more ancient idolatry, and in his notion of which I affirm him to have been utterly mistaken : and here I must observe, that it is not at all doubted, but that these heathens did worship the sun, moon, and stars ; that which I pretend is, that this author is very much out in the account which he gives of their worship of them.

1. He affirms, p. 74, that they worshipped these heavenly bodies as visible and corporeal deities, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead : whereas, on the contrary, they believed these very bodies themselves to be animated by celestial spirits, who resided in them, and rendered them thereby proper objects of their adoration.

2. That they worshipped these visible and corporeal deities as the supreme God ; whereas they constantly acknowledged a first and invisible Godhead superior to them.

3. That they worshipped no other gods but these (p. 97, 100), and amongst these the sun as supreme ; when on the contrary it is certain, even from the very authors that himself produces, that they worshipped other deities, both heroes and demons, of which this man yet pretends with so much assurance, that they had no notion.

And all these are not only gross errors for an author, who writes with such confidence as if he would be thought to have been initiated into all the religions of which he discourses, but such as utterly ruin all that he has to say to support his true and only notion of idolatry. But I must examine these points more particularly. And,

1. “That these nations did not worship the heavenly bodies as visible and corporeal deities, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead.”

This is an assertion not only so monstrously absurd in itself, but so contrary to all the accounts we have from antiquity of the theology of those nations to which he refers us, that I must once more confess, that I never lay under a greater temp-

tation to disbelieve my own senses, or to suspect my understanding of plain words than now : on the one hand, I am sure our author here defines idolatry to be, “the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the stars, or some other visible and corporeal deity, not only as the supreme God, but so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead :” that is to say, that he who is an idolater, must worship them as mere corporeal parts of the creation, void of all understanding ; for so I think visible and corporeal gods must be taken, when opposed to all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead. And yet on the other hand, how to reconcile such a paradox with either the common reason of mankind, as I have observed before ; or the clear evidences of the Gentile world to the contrary, as I observe now, I am not able to comprehend : but let our author take his choice ; for I will here again do more than I need, rather than be thought to omit any thing that was fit to be taken notice of. If he thinks good to own this notion, I will then offer what may serve to confute it ; but if being admonished of the absurdity of it, he shall choose rather to wrest his words to some other meaning than they naturally bear, I shall only have spent some little time in confuting that, which if he does not, I am certain nobody else will ever affirm.

And to begin where himself does, with the holy Scriptures, not only the most certain but the most ancient history in the world.

He produces indeed a few texts from whence it may be concluded, that the heathens of old did worship the sun, moon, and stars ; but that they worshipped them (according to his notion) as corporeal deities, and so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead ; for this he has not so much as offered at one single proof.

For, 1. As to his first instance (and which indeed is the first account we have) of idolatry, p. 77. The Scripture, it is true, tells us, that Terah, Abraham’s father, worshipped strange gods ; but that these gods were corporeal deities, and that they worshipped them so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead, of this there is not a word ; see Josh. xxiv. 2. and I shall presently shew the contrary.

If we go on with him to the next (and as he thinks (p. 78.) the first plain) intimation we find of idolatry in Palestine, “in the history of Jacob ; after his conversation with the Shechemites,

Gen. xxxv. where, upon his departure from that city by God's especial command, he builds an altar at Bethel to God, and commands his family to put away their Θεοὶ ἑτεροῦτοι, or strange gods :” Neither here shall we find our author's notion so much insinuated, but as I will now prove, much to the contrary. It is not to be doubted but that these gods were the same that they worshipped in Syria, when they were in the house of Laban ; and that therefore the images which Jacob buried could be no other than the teraphim, so usual amongst them, *i. e.* such as Rachel stole from her father Laban, Gen. xxxi. 30. How far from hence it might be proved, that their idolatry did not consist merely in their worshipping of the sun, the moon, and the stars, I shall not now dispute : let us suppose these teraphim to have been not only made by planetary influences, but designed to represent the sun, or some other heavenly bodies ; then, I say, it follows both from the history of Laban, and from the accounts we have of these idols, that they did not worship the sun as a corporeal deity, and by consequence that that cannot be the true notion of their idolatry which is pretended to be. For,

As to Laban, we read, Gen. xxxi. 53, that when he ratified the covenant with Jacob, he called to witness not only the God of Abraham, but the Θεὸν ἑτεροῦτον, his own domestic deity too, *i. e.* in our author's opinion, the sun : “The God (says he) of Abraham, and the god of Nahor judge betwixt us.” Now this plainly shews, that Laban looked upon his father's God (and who was also the God of Terah before-mentioned, Josh. xxiv. 2.) not to be a mere corporeal deity, but as having an intellectual being incorporated in it, that was both capable of hearing their oath, and of judging betwixt them, and without which he could never have called him to witness their contract.

2. For what concerns the teraphim, it appears from holy Scripture, that the Chaldeans made use of them not only as symbols for worship, but for oracles too, and as such were wont to consult them ; it was for this that Rachel is supposed to have stolen away her father's gods, Gen. xxxi. that so when he should come and miss her husband, he might not be able to inquire of them which way to pursue after him. We read in Ezek. xxi. 21, “That the king of Babylon consulted with his teraphim,” which St. Jerome* calls consulting with

* Hieron. in l. 7. in Ezek. p. 212. [vol. 5. p. 249. Veron. 1736.]

his oracle, after the manner of his country : and the prophet Zechariah, ch. x. 2, tells the people, “that their teraphim had spoken vanity :” now how could this possibly be, had the Chaldeans worshipped only visible and corporeal deities ? Is not this an undeniable evidence, that they acknowledged in the heavenly bodies invisible spirits to descend and influence their teraphim, so as to make them speak ?

Many are the accounts that may be given of these idols, and which have been collected with much exactness by those great men, Gerard Vossius,* Mr. Selden,† &c. But I shall content myself to subjoin the authority of one only person, now living, and no way inferior to any that can be produced. “It seems,” says he,‡ “to have been the opinion of these ancient idolaters, that some spiritualities from superior intelligences and heavenly powers, did influence such images as they made in such figures as they thought acceptable to them, and dedicated to them : and therefore called such their images themselves God, and thought them so, at least *Deos vicarios*, inferior deities, mediators between them and the superior ; and did offer sacrifice, and burnt incense, that they might draw down and entice (as it were) those spiritual influences to reside on those images, that so they might declare to them, and do for them what they desired.” And elsewhere he says,§ “That the modern Zabii not only pretend to succeed the old Chaldees in their religion, but that as to their rites about telesms and figures and images, we cannot but easily believe that they were derived to them from ancient times.”

And now that I mention the Zabii, I cannot but observe the wonderful acuteness of our author in his reflections upon them ; he calls it, p. 76, “the dream of the Zabii ;” and he decretorily condemns all that is said by learned men on their behalf, merely because “he (a person so accurately versed in all the learning of the East) can find no ancient footsteps of any such people in the world,” p. 110, 111 ; and that Dr. Spencer has discovered for him, “that the name is no older than Mahomet, who called them Zabii, because they lay eastward from Arabia ; for so the word signifies, Easterlings.”

Thus this author, and still, as becomes himself, he pronounces dictator-like, and is always in the wrong ; for the

* Vossius de Idol. lib. 1. [Amst. 1641.]

† Selden. de diis Syris Syntag. i. c. 2. [p. 96, &c. Lips. 1672.]

‡ Dr. Pocock on Hosea xiii. 2. p. 725. [vol. 2. p. 639. Lond. 1740.]

§ Idem on Hosea iii. 4. [Ibid. p. 128.]

question is not about the name of Zabii (which from henceforth must signify Easterlings, though the learned Dr. Spencer* had collected no less than five several significations of it, and every one supported by probable conjectures), but about the people, or rather the religion; and to draw this matter out of the clouds, and shew what an admirable critic we have got here, it is just as if a man should undertake to prove the Britons to be a people of no antiquity, because they are now called Welsh, and that is but a modern name.

Now according to this true state of this matter, it is evidently shewn by that learned person I before mentioned,† that the religion of the Zabii is not only of no modern date, but is as ancient, or even more ancient than Abraham. Abulfeda calls it the “most ancient religion;”‡ and Saidus Batricides attributes the original of the Zabii, thus considered, in their manners and superstitions, to the time of Nachor, Abraham’s grandfather.§ To this subscribes the learned and inquisitive Hornbeck; and who thinks them to be the same with those that were anciently called Sabæi; and Abul-Pharajius, cited by Dr. Spencer,|| thus confirms it: “That which we certainly know of the sect of the Zabii is, that their profession is altogether the same with the profession of the ancient Chaldeans.”

As for the point before us, we are told¶ that they worshipped the host of heaven, supposing the stars to be animated by divine understandings. Dr. Pocock adds,** “That they looked upon the planets as mediators between the supreme God and men;” and cites Gregorius Abulfaræus and Shares-tanius for his warrant; which last expressly says,†† “That they worship the bodies of the planets, as the habitation of the living, rational, and intellectual substances, which they suppose to animate them.”

Now these are all plain and rational accounts why they should worship these heavenly bodies; but to talk of their worshipping the sun, moon, and stars, as visible and corporeal deities, and that so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead, is to represent their worship

* De Legib. Hebr. l. 2. c. 1. sect. 1. [p. 277. Tubing. 1732.]

† Spencer, ib. l. 2. c. 1. sect. 2. [p. 279.]

‡ Dr. Spencer, ib. p. 240. [p. 279.]

§ De Convers. Indor. l. 1. c. 4.

|| Hist. Dynast. D. 9. p. 281.

¶ Spencer, ib. p. 237, 238. [Ibid. p. 280.]

** Not. in Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 143. [Oxon. 1650.]

†† Ibid. p. 146.

contrary not only to truth, but to common sense and reason too. But when men are resolved to advance such notions as this author does, they must have proofs of the same kind. And this for the Chaldeans.

As to the Egyptians, Jamblicus informs us, * that they worshipped the sun, moon, and stars as visible gods, but such as were compounded of soul and body, and they esteemed those planets to be seats only of those celestial spirits, that were to take care of human affairs.

It was a nice question put by Porphyry to an Egyptian priest,† “How the sun, moon, and stars could be gods, seeing the gods are incorporeal?”

Jamblicus answers, “That the incorporeal gods assume those bodies, by which they become visible.” And Syrianus asserts‡ the celestial animals, as he calls them, to be the images of the Maker of the world, and to communicate sense to it.

But it may be said, that these were philosophers, and endeavoured to make the best of their idolatry. I answer, that Jamblicus§ declares, he delivers nothing but according to the old Egyptian books: and he delivers it for the true Egyptian theology;|| that there was one supreme God above all; next him the Demiurgus; the third principle he calls Βασιλεὺς, and some think the sun is meant by it, as the immediate governor of the world. If so, there is great reason why the sun should be worshipped under the names of Moloch and Baal, as being king and lord of this inferior world. And thus neither did the Egyptians worship these heavenly bodies so as to exclude all sense of a spiritual and invisible Godhead.

If from both these nations we pass finally to the Persians, Jac. Golius will give us the very same account of them,¶ viz. that the ancient Persians did worship celestial spirits, as having a particular presidency over the material part of the world.

And now, after so many plain testimonies in this matter, were it yet needful to look into any other countries, we should find the case to be everywhere the same. Pliny** pleads much for the divinity of the sun; but does he believe it to be a visible and corporeal deity, so as to exclude any invisible and spiritual Godhead? No, on the contrary, he calls it the

* Jamblic. de Myster. sect. 37. [p. 29. Oxon. 1678.]

† Id. sect. 1. c. 17. [Ibid.]

‡ Syrian. in Metaphys. l. 12.

§ Jambl. de Myster. sect. c. 1. [Ibid. p. 157.]

|| Cap. 2. [Ibid. p. 158. &c.]

¶ Gol. Not. in Alferg. p. 20, 21.

** Pliny, l. 2. c. 6. [c. 4.] [vol. 1. p. 230. Par. 1827.]

“spirit and mind of the world.” He attributes sense and understanding to it; and affirms from Homer, “that it sees and hears all.” And indeed this is so often insisted upon by that poet, that Eustathius* from thence observes, that the sun was to be considered not only as a luminary of the heavens, but as a *Σωματικὸς Δαίμων*, “a spirit clothed with such an illustrious body.” And in another place,† he takes notice of the decency of Homer, that he calls the heavenly powers to be witnesses of oaths, and particularly the sun.

Zeῦ Πάτερ ————— κύδιστε, μέγιστε,
'Ἡέλιος θ' ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς, καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις,
'Υμεῖς μάρτυροί ἐστε, φυλάσσετε δ' ὅρκια πιστά.

So little truth is there in this first of our author's pretences, “That the ancients did worship the sun, the moon, and the stars, as visible and corporeal deities, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead.” Let us see,

2ndly, Whether they who worshipped these planets (p. 97) looked upon them as the supreme deities, so as not to acknowledge any divinity above them.

And here it must be confessed, he has at least an appearance of truth. For, as for the Chaldeans, Maimonides‡ tells us of the ancient Zabii, “that they had no other gods but the stars;” and that among them, they looked upon the sun as supreme.§ From whence our learned Pocock|| seems to think it not far from the truth, to say, that possibly they derived their very name of Zabii; Saba in the Hebrew signifying an Host, as if one should say, *צבא השמים*, worshippers of the host of heaven.

The same is the account which Sanchoniathon, mentioned by Eusebius¶ and St. Cyril,** gives of the Phœnicians, “That they worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, as the only immortal gods, among which the sun was chief, called by them Beth-Samen, Lord of Heaven.” And for the Persians,†† Herodotus tells us,‡‡ that the sun was their only God, *Θεὸν δὲ*

* Eustath. in Homer Odyss. T. p. 1871.

† In Iliad. T. p. 414.

‡ Mor. Nevoch. l. 3. c. 29.

§ Hornbeck de Convers. Ind. l. 1. c. 4.

|| Pocock Not. in Spec. Hist. Ar. [ut supra] p. 139.

¶ Euseb. Præp. Evan. l. 1. c. 9. p. 30. [Colon. 1688.]

** Cyril. contra Jul. l. 6. p. 205. c. [Lutet. 1638.]

†† [The author is here in error. Herodotus and Strabo say this of the Massagetæ, not of the Persians.]

‡‡ Herodot. l. 1.

μόνον ἥλιον σέβονται: to which Strabo* and Trogus† in Justin, assent. And Hesychius, though he rejects this, yet acknowledges him to be the first or supreme God amongst them. Μίθρης (says he) ὁ πρῶτος ἐν Πέρσαις Θεός. All which seems to be confirmed by those ancient inscriptions collected by Gruterus and others,‡

DEO SOLI INVICTO. OMNIPOTENTI DEO.

And again, SOLI INVICTO ET LUNÆ ÆTERNÆ.

From all which it may be thought to follow, that (as this author here tells us, p. 97.) the gods which those ancient heathens worshipped, were nothing but the heavenly bodies, or the sun, as the supreme Deity.

But yet if we inquire more exactly into these things, we shall find their worship to have been much otherwise than what at first sight it appears to be; for to begin with those I last named, the Persians; and than whom none have been more famed for adoring the sun: Plutarch§ tells us, that they had a notion of a deity whom they called Oromasdes, superior to him, and the account of whom (derived to them from Zoroaster) he thus delivers to us. They believed that there were two contrary principles, the one good, the other evil. The former of these they called Oromasdes, whom they also looked upon as the Δημιουργός, or creator, as Agathius informs us; the other Arimanius. Between these two, they placed their Mithras, or the Sun, who was esteemed by them as much inferior to Oromasdes, as superior to Arimanius. To this Oromasdes they ascribed the creation of the stars, and of the good gods; thus Plutarch: but Photius|| carries it yet a little further, in his account of a book written by Theodorus, bishop of Mopsuestia, concerning the Persian rites; he says, that they believed the first principle of all to be Ζαρονάμ, and that he begat the other two, which, with some little difference, he calls Ormisdas and Satan.

But not to insist upon these accounts: we are told by a

* Strabo. l. 11. [Ἐὐὸν δὲ ἥλιον μόνον ἡγοῦνται. P. 513. ed. I. Casaub. Lut. Par. 1620.]

† Trogus apud Justinum, [Hist. Phil.] l. 1. [c. 10.] vid. Voss. de Joel. [de Idol.] l. 2. c. 9. [ut supra, p. 131. col. 1.]

‡ Apud Voss. loc. cit. vid. Hornb. de Con. Ind. p. 19. Elmenhorst. in Arnob. p. 27, &c. [Hamb. 1610.]

§ De Iside et Osiride. [vol. 7. p. 456, 457. ed. Reisk. Lips. 1777.]

|| Photius Cod. 81.

learned man,* in his notes upon Alferganus, that the Persians gave the names of their gods to their months and days, according to the ancient religion of the Persians and Magi, whereby they did believe their gods to preside over them; it being a principle among them, as well as among all other nations of the East, that the things of this lower world are administered by angels. The spirit over the sun, they called Mihrgian, from Mitro, the sun. But above all those, they believed there was one supreme God.

Eubulus,† who wrote the history of Mithras (which was extant in St. Jerome's time), hath given a particular account of the cave which Zoroaster made in honour of another and superior Mithras, the Father and Maker of the world. Even Herodotus himself, whom this author so confidently produces for his warrant (but cites no particular passage of him), distinguishes their Jupiter from the Sun, and says,‡ by it they understood the whole heaven in which the sun is fixed; and sacrificed to him distinctly from the other. And so does Strabo,§ another of his authors: Xenophon often mentions a Ζεὺς Πατερῶος, as a deity superior to the sun; especially where speaking of Cyrus|| being admonished in a dream of his approaching death, he tells us, that he sacrificed to his country Jupiter first, and then to the sun: and Plutarch brings in Darius in like manner addressing to him, Ζεῦ Πατερῶε Περσῶν, "thou our country Jupiter, or supreme god of the Persians."

I might here add, that the same is the opinion of those Persees¶ who stick to their ancient religion at this day; but these have been already collected by a very eminent hand. I shall conclude therefore, with the form of that proclamation which Cyrus gave in favour of the Jews, and by which it plainly appears, that they believed the same first and sovereign Deity with ourselves, Ezra i. 2: "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all kingdoms of the earth, and hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem." And in the next verse, he calls the same God, "the Lord God of Israel." And I hope this author will not say that was the sun, or any other visible and corporeal deity.

* Jac. Golius Not. in Alferg. p. 20.

† Porphy. de antro Nympharum. [p. 253, 254. Cantab. 1655.]

‡ Herod. Clio n. 131. p. 56. [ed. T. Gale, Lond. 1679.]

§ Strabo l. 15. p. 503. [ut supra, p. 732.]

|| See Dr. Cudworth, l. i. c. 4.

¶ See Dr. Stillingfleet's Answer to T. G. p. 110.

I have enlarged myself the more on this part of antiquity, because the Persians, if any, must have been found to worship the sun as the supreme God. I shall be very short in other nations, and so close this consideration.

And for what concerns the Egyptians, I have already given some account of their theology; and we may learn from thence, how it came to pass, that the sun (whom none of the heathens looked upon as absolutely the supreme and highest Being) is yet so often spoken of by them as such. For as Jamblicus* informs us, out of the old Egyptian books, they believed one supreme God above all, next him the Demiurgus, and then Βασιλεὺς, or the sun; whom they esteemed the supreme visible God, and as he who had the superintendency over the visible world. To which I will add the authority of Porphyry,† and that the rather for that in his Epistle to Anebo, he seems to suspect that the old Egyptians looked no farther than the sun, moon, and stars. But it is plain, that this was only a difficulty, which he puts to the Egyptian priest; since himself owns that they represented the Creator, whom they called Cneph, with an egg in his mouth, to signify the production of the world; and of which the sun is but a part.

And here I may not omit another notion of the Egyptians, and which was not theirs only; and from whence we may again know how to understand those who seem to represent the sun as the supreme Deity.‡ It was a principle in their theology, that the supreme God of all is not to be worshipped by any “external and sensible thing, not so much as by vocal prayer, but only by pure silence and contemplation:” but that “sacrifices and hymns were to be made to powers inferior to him.” Among these they esteemed the sun, moon and stars to be the chief; from whence it was obvious enough to mistake, that because these were the highest deities, to whom they paid any external adoration, therefore they had no other superior to them.

And now there remain only the Chaldeans and Phœnicians to be considered; and of these, both Gregorius Abulfarajus and Sharestanus, cited by our learned Dr. Pocock,§ give us accounts very different from that of Maimonides before-men-

* See before.

† Euseb. Præp. Ev. lib. 3. [ut supra, p. 115.]

‡ Porphyry. de Abst. l. 2. sect. 34. [p. 78. Cantab. 1655.]

§ Not. in Specim. Hist. Arab. [ut supra] p. 143.

tioned ; and that judicious and reverend author justly esteems the credit of Abulfarajus preferable to R. Maimon's, for that he was better acquainted with their writings, and read them in their own language, which the other did not. And if what Sharestanus reports* be true, that it was their principle, that between the supreme God and us there must be some mediators ; this again will furnish us with yet another reason, why the sun may easily have been mistaken for their supreme Deity, because he was the principal mediator betwixt God and them, and the highest to which they paid any immediate external adoration. And though this author is as positive as if he had all the evidence in the world for it (p. 76.), "that God made an extraordinary discovery of himself to Abraham, as Lord of all things, in opposition to the idolatry of his own country ;" by which he would imply, that the Chaldeans, in those days, did not suppose God to be the "Lord of all things ;" yet is it (like the rest of his book) all imagination, without any thing to support it. For indeed we have all the reason in the world to believe, that the Chaldeans had at this time the knowledge of the one true God. 1. It appears by manifest computation, that Shem, from whom Terah and Abraham were descended, was yet living with them, and it is altogether unaccountable, either that himself should have lost the knowledge of the "one true supreme God ;" or that if he retained it, all the rest of his family should have been utterly ignorant of it. 2. It is indeed said in holy Scripture, Josh. xxiv. 2 : "that they worshipped strange gods ;" but it is not said, that they either worshipped them as the supreme God, or had utterly lost all sense and apprehension of any such spiritual and invisible Godhead. 3. In all the history of God's calling Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, we do not find any thing to make us believe that God was pleased to make the discovery of himself to him "as Lord of all things," in opposition to the idolatry of his family. 4. It is hard to suppose, that when all the barbarous nations, as we have seen, preserved the notion of the true supreme God, only these Chaldeans should lose it ; it was but on the other side of the river, that we find the knowledge of God preserved in the land of Canaan. And lastly, we do certainly know, that but two generations after Laban, though he did worship (as it is said of Terah) *Θεοὺς ἄλλοτρίους* strange gods too, yet he

* Not. in Specim. Hist. Arab. [Ibid.] p. 140.

retained with them a very good sense and apprehension of the supreme God, as is plain from Gen. xxxi. where the God of Abraham is found to appear to him, ver. 29. And again, ver. 53, he ratifies his covenant with his son Jacob, swearing by the God of Abraham, as well as by the strange god, the god of Nahor.

To conclude: Macrobius,* than whom none could have taken more pains to shew the universal worship of the sun, was yet so far from thinking that it excluded all sense and apprehension of a supreme God, that he plainly says in the beginning, that he intended to treat only of the *dii qui sub cælo sunt*, the lower sort of worldly gods; and in his Commentary upon the Dream of Scipio, he plainly acknowledges a higher divinity, whom he calls the *Prima Causa, et Omnipotentissimus Deus*; the First Cause, and most Almighty God.

I shall close all with a passage of Plutarch,† which will at once shew both that the heathens had a knowledge of the supreme God amongst them, and that it was He whom they all every where adored as such, however differing in their manners and ceremonies from one another: “No inanimate thing can be a god to men; but they who bestow upon us a continual supply of what is sufficient for us, have therefore been esteemed gods by us; which gods are not different among different nations, as if the Barbarians and Greeks, the southern and northern people had not the same God; but as the sun, and moon, and heaven, and earth, and sea, are common to all, but are called differently by different men; so though there be but ONE WORD, or REASON, ordering all those things, and but ONE PROVIDENCE dispensing all things, the inferior powers which are appointed over all, having had several names and honours from several persons, and by the laws of several countries, have been every where worshipped throughout the whole world.”

I pass on finally to inquire,

3. Whether these ancient idolaters, as is pretended (p. 97, 100), did so worship these heavenly bodies as to worship nothing besides; and, in particular, so as to exclude all notion of heroes and demons.

This indeed is an assertion worthy our author, who, as he has hitherto advanced nothing but paradoxes, so he resolves

* Macrobius. Saturnal.

† Plutarch. de Iside et Osiride.

he will not now alter his character, by representing antiquity truly at the last.

I have already shewn, in opposition to this suggestion, how the Egyptians had their *Divi*, or canonized men, presently after the flood; and that we have some reason to believe their principal Deities, *viz.* Apis and Osiris, to have been such; I will now add, that the first dynasties of Manetho, of gods and demigods upon earth, confirms this, and to which the old Egyptian Chronicon in Syncellus adds yet more force. St. Cyril tells us from Sanchoniathon, that not only the most ancient Greeks, but especially the Phœnicians and Egyptians, from whom this superstition was derived to all others (though our author, p. 101, ever in the wrong, will have the Greeks to be the inventors of it),* esteeming those the greatest gods, τοὺς τὰ πρὸς τὴν βιωτικὴν χρεῖαν εὐρόντας, ἢ κατὰ τὸ εὖ ποιήσαντας τὰ ἔθνη, who had either found out some things useful for the life of man, or otherwise deserved well of their country. Ἐυεργέτας τε τούτους καὶ πολλῶν αἰτίας ἀγαθῶν ἡγούμενοι ὡς θεοὺς προσεκύνουν, καὶ εἰς τὸ χρεῶν καταστάντες ναοὺς κατεσκευασμένους, στύλας τε καὶ ῥάβδους ἀφίερουν ἐξ ὀνόματος αὐτῶν. And looking upon them as their benefactors and causes of great good to them, they worshipped them as gods, and prepared temples for that purpose, and consecrated pillars and other ensigns of honour to their memory. And, as the holy Father from the same author goes on, these they greatly worshipped, and the Phœnicians especially dedicated festivals unto them.

But it was not enough for our author merely to advance a most false conclusion concerning these Gentiles, unless he also choose an evidence for it that speaks the direct contrary to his assertion: for thus it became him to keep up a just decorum between his principles and his proofs, and so we may be satisfied, that he values truth alike in both.

“This (says he, p. 100) is attested by all historians, *viz.* that the old heathen nations worshipped only the stars, without any notion of heroes and demons.” And the very first he instances in, is Diodorus Siculus for the Egyptians.

But this is perfectly to astonish us, and too plainly shews that some men's assurance is without bounds, as well as without reason: for what? Does Diodorus Siculus say that the Egyptians worshipped only the stars, without any notion

* Cyrillus Alex. contra Julian. l. 6. [ut supra.] p. 205. C. D.

of heroes and demons? This is worse than to write history out of an invisible manuscript; it is indeed to write history directly contrary to the visible records out of which he pretends to have taken it: for let this author look into Diodorus Siculus,* whom I would willingly hope he has never yet read, and there he will find him in his first book, so far from what he pretends, that, on the contrary, he expressly distinguishes between two sorts of gods among the Egyptians, and discourses of them in order: and first of the celestial gods, p. 10, two of which, he says, the Egyptians first of all had, τὸν τε ἥλιον καὶ τὴν Σελήνην, the sun and the moon. Having discoursed of these he thus formally concludes his account, p. 12. "And this the Egyptians say concerning their celestial gods, and such as had an eternal generation."

And then goes on immediately on the other sort, which this author pretends Diodorus Siculus denies them to have had ANY NOTION OF (ibid.): "Ἄλλους δ' ἐκ τούτων ἐπιγείους γενέσθαι φασίν, ὑπάρξαντας μὲν θνητούς, διὰ δὲ σύνεσιν καὶ κοινὴν ἀνθρώπων εὐεργεσίαν τετυχηκότας τῆς ἀθανασίας. But besides these (the sun and moon, &c.) they say there are other terrestrial gods, mortals indeed by nature, but for their wisdom and prudence, and the benefits they did to mankind, endued with immortality; of which kind (says he) were some of the kings of Egypt. In the next page (p. 13.) he places amongst these, our author's friends Isis and Osiris, whose history he relates: and finally, to raise his ill choice to the highest evidence, having given a long relation of these kind of deities, he concludes as directly against our author's other assertion (p. 101.), "that this kind of idolatry was the invention of the vain and lying Greeks," as if he † had been retained on our side, by shewing expressly how they derived this kind of idolatry from the Egyptians, by the means of Orpheus, who had been initiated in the Egyptian rites: and then gives us this universal conclusion (p. 21.), Καθόλου δὲ φασὶ τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἐξιδιάζεσθαι τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους Ἡρώας τε καὶ Θεοὺς, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἀποικίας τὰς παρ' ἑαυτῶν. "That the Egyptians do in general say, that the Grecians have appropriated to themselves the most eminent of their heroes and gods, as well as of their colonies."

* Diodorus Siculus Ed. Hanov. G. L. An. 1604.

† Diod. Siculus, [Ibid.] p. 20, 21.

So much would it have been for our author's reputation, if Diodorus Siculus too, had been an invisible manuscript.

2. The next author he produces is Herodotus, who, he says, affirms the same of the Persians and Chaldeans, that they worshipped only the stars, without any notion of heroes and demons; but concerning the former part of his assertion, I have already shewn that they did not worship only the stars, but acknowledged a supreme Deity above them; and for the latter, the very same Herodotus who says this of the Persians, in his first book, p. 100, 101, does directly contradict this conclusion, "that this was the sense of all the old heathen nations, but especially that the worshipping of men and women was the invention of the vain and lying Greeks," in the very next, where he tells us that they derived "their twelve gods from the Egyptians,"* who were the first inventors of this idolatry.

3. The same he says, in the next place, is affirmed by Strabo and Justin of the Arabians: had he been pleased to produce some passages from these authors, wherein they do say, "that the Arabians worship only the stars, without any notion of heroes and demons," we should have had less cause to suspect his assertion; Strabo indeed says,† "that the Arabians worshipped the sun," but that either he or Justin have ever affirmed what this author pretends, I am yet to learn; in the mean time this I am sure that other authors have given us a very contrary account of them. Lucan tells us ‡ that their only god was Jupiter Ammon, whom that learned critic, Gerard Vossius, does not without reason suppose to have been Cham, whose eldest son Chus, as I have before shewn, first planted himself there. Arrian§ in his History of Alexander's Expedition, says, that they had two gods, Οὐρανός, of the heaven, and Διόνυσος, or Bacchus; and that it was this that encouraged that great conqueror to invade them, that he might make himself a third god amongst them; and this may be well enough consistent with the other account, if what some learned men suppose be allowed; that these were their own proper gods, whereas Jupiter Ammon was rather the deity of the Ammonites, among whom his oracle stood, and to whom they only sent ambassadors to consult upon occasions,

* Herodotus, l. 2. c. 4. [ut supra] p. 91.

† Strabo, l. 16 p. 539. [ut supra, p. 784.]

‡ Lucan. l. 9. v. 517.

§ Arrian. de Exped. Alex. l. 7. p. 486.

it not appearing that the Arabians had any temple for him in their own country : so that here too our author is mistaken, for that the Arabians* had other gods than the stars, and were not without all notion of heroes and demons.

4. His fourth instance is in the ancient Germans,† and of them I confess Cæsar does say what he pretends ; but then it is to be observed that in the very same place he utterly overthrows all the use this author can be supposed to make of it, viz. to shew “that all the heathen nations worshipped only the stars, without any notion of heroes or demons ;” seeing in the very same place he says of the ancient Gauls, that they worshipped such kind of gods as he denies any of the heathens did, and that with a superstition so like that of some of his acquaintance, that I cannot forbear taking notice of it : “The Gauls (says he) are very superstitious, and therefore if they fall into any dangerous distemper, or are concerned in war, or in any other danger, they straightway sacrifice, &c. For this purpose they have their particular gods ; Mercury to prosper them in their journeys, or help them in their traffic ; Apollo to cure them in their sickness ; Minerva to find out any artificial works ; Mars for war, &c.” And this our author could not but know, since in the very passage to which he refers, he opposes the Germans to them : “the Germans (says he) differ much from this custom,” viz. (of the Gauls) which he had just before recounted ; “for they esteem them only for gods whom they see, and by whom they are manifestly helped, the sun, Vulcan, and the moon.”

But I have yet more to except against this instance ; for however Cæsar came to be misinformed, the ancient Germans had other gods, even such as this author denies to all the ancient idolaters.‡ Tacitus mentions (cap. 9) Mars as the chief god of the Tencteri, a nation bordering upon the Rhine ; and in his book *de Moribus Germanorum* he speaks of Hercules as another of their deities. That they also worshipped Mercury we learn from the same author, whom in their language they called Gota or Wota, as Gotefridus Viterbiensis§ in his *Chronicon* observes ; from whence also he supposes that their word *Got*, signifying *God*, is derived ; though in this other learned men dissent from him.

* Vossius de Idol. l. 1. c. 26. [ut supra. p. 70. col. 2.]

† Cæs. Com. l. 6.

‡ Hist. l. 6. cap. 64.

§ Vos. de Idol. l. 1. p. 240. [ut supra, p. 102.]

And lastly, the same Tacitus* mentions yet another god more ancient than all these, the first founder of their country, Tuisto, whom they worshipped, with his son Manus; and these, some think, were no other than Gomar, and his son Thogorma or Aschenar, by whom Germany was peopled after the flood; though Vossius rather supposes them yet of a greater antiquity, believing Tuisto to be Adam, and Manus, to whom also Tacitus assigns three sons, Noah, by whom the world was again established after the flood.

4. And this may suffice for his particular authorities. His next are universal; for he says, Eusebius in his book *de Præparatione Evangelica*, p. 100, has shewn this to be the sense of all the old heathen nations, as may be seen in his collections of their several opinions, where he proves "that the ancient heathens only worshipped the stars, without any notion of heroes or demons."

Good God! what can be done with such a man as this? Eusebius has proved that all the ancient heathens worshipped only the stars, without any notion of heroes and demons, which was a "mere invention of the vain and lying Greeks!" And yet has this very Eusebius quoted Diodorus Siculus† for his account of the Egyptian theology. He distinguishes with him their gods into celestial and terrestrial. Of the first, he treats in his first book from that author, c. 7, of the second in his next, (Lib. 2. c. i. p. 45.) The very title of his chapter is, "an Epitome of the Egyptian Theology, and how it passed from them to the Greeks." In the beginning of it he speaks how their gods, who had been mortal men, were, for their benefits they did to mankind and for their wisdom, made immortal deities." He exemplifies this in a large account of their mythology, pp. 45, 46, 47, 48, and then concludes expressly with his author, Τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἐξειδιάζεσθαι τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους Αἰγυπτίων Ἡρώας τε καὶ Θεοὺς, "that the Greeks had appropriated to themselves the principal heroes, and gods of the Egyptians." And yet this is the author that has shewn at large, p. 100, how "all the whole heathen nations worshipped only the stars, without any notion of heroes and demons!"

His other author is Macrobius, who, he says, has proved it of all the ancient idolaters, that they worshipped the sun as

* De Moribus German. c. 2.

† Euseb. Præp. Evan. l. 2. c. 1. [ut supra, p. 52.]

the supreme Deity. He should have added, to make good his conclusion, p. 100, "and that so as to exclude all notion of heroes and demons." But this Macrobius never undertook to do: and I have before shewn that in the very book of his Saturnals, here mentioned, he was so far from shewing that they worshipped the sun as the (absolutely) supreme Deity, that in the beginning of his discourse he expressly restrains it to the *dii duntaxat qui sub cœlo sunt*, or sub-celestial deities: and in his Comment upon Scipio's Dream, he acknowledges, above the sun and heaven, many other gods; *viz.* 1. An eternal Psyche, the Creator both of the heaven and the sun. 2ndly, A perfect mind or intellect, and (as he calls him) *Omnipotentissimus Deus*, the most omnipotent of all gods.

5. He has two authors whom he produces; our own learned Selden, in his book *de Diis Syris*, and Gerard Vossius, in nothing inferior to him, who have proved "all the idols mentioned in Scripture to have been so many appellations of the sun, whom the ancient idolaters believed to have been the supreme God and Creator of the world (and therefore of himself too, for he is part of it), as Baal, Baal-Peor, Bel, Molech, Baal-Zebub, and Mithras;" though I doubt this last was taken from some invisible manuscript of the Bible, for I do not remember that I have ever met with it in any of the editions that are extant of those sacred volumes.

But to let this pass too: did Mr. Selden then, and Gerard Vossius in good truth, undertake to shew, that all the ancient idolaters worshipped the sun as the supreme God, so as to exclude all notions of demons and heroes?

1st. Mr. Selden gives only a critical account of the Syrian deities; and in several of them shews, that others at least have believed them to be somewhat else than the sun.

2ndly. Gerard Vossius is so far from favouring this man's pretences, that, on the contrary, it is he who has spent his whole first book of idolatry, to give an account of the ancient heroes that were consecrated by the Gentiles into gods: it is he that interprets the Egyptian Osiris to be Mizraim; the Bel of the Chaldeans to be Nimrod; the Tuisco of the Germans, Gomer, or perhaps Adam. In short, he shews this sort of idolatry to have been introduced among the heathens the very age after the flood, even before God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees.

And thus have I considered this author's pretences to antiquity; and I think I may say, there is nothing but falseness

and vision in all his notions and authorities. Upon the whole, I shall beg leave very briefly to conclude as to the nature of idolatry :

I. That seeing all these ancient idolaters did acknowledge one supreme, invisible, and spiritual Godhead, their idolatry did not consist in worshipping the heavenly bodies so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of any such thing.

II. That seeing they believed the sun and other heavenly bodies to be the vehicles only of immaterial and spiritual substances, who had the superintendency over the affairs of this lower world, and were to be applied to as mediators between God and them ; their idolatry did not consist in worshipping any visible or corporeal deities as the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead, superior to their deities. By consequence,

III. That either this, which our author here lays down, is not (as he pretends) the true and only notion of idolatry ; or if it be, none of those ancient nations were idolaters.

IV. Though I dare not presume to establish true and only notions in this case ; yet from what has been said, I think we may reasonably conclude their idolatry to have consisted especially in these two things : either, 1st. That they worshipped the true God by corporeal and visible symbols ; or that 2ndly, together with the true God, they worshipped other inferior deities ; whether intelligences (which they supposed to reside in the heavenly bodies) or demons. And that by consequence,

To worship the supreme God in any corporeal representation or image whatsoever ; or to pay divine worship to any created being, whether spirit or separate soul ; either as having the power over this inferior world, to administer things in it, or as mediators between the supreme God and us : this is, if not the only, yet at least a true notion of idolatry.

CHAP. IV.

Of the notion of Idolatry under the Law ; and that it did not consist in the giving the worship of the supreme God to some created, corporeal, or visible Deity, as supposing it to be the supreme God.

THIS was the next point I proposed to examine, and our author thus delivers his opinion of it, p. 80 : “ That accord-

ing to the law, idolatry is giving the worship of the supreme God to any created, corporeal, or visible deity, or any thing that can be represented by an image, which nothing but corporeal beings can, p. 81, and to suppose such a being the supreme Deity.

“And though there may seem to be two sorts of it; first, either to worship a material and created being as the supreme Deity, or, secondly, to ascribe any corporeal form or shape to the Divine nature; yet in the result both are but one; for to ascribe unto the supreme God any corporeal form, is the same thing as to worship a created being, for so is every corporeal substance.

“This is, I say, the TRUE and ONLY notion of idolatry.”

This is indeed great and magisterial, and would almost dispose a man to think, that there should certainly be at least something of truth where there is so very much confidence. But we have had already sufficient reason to suspect him, where he seems least to suspect himself. Here I cannot but wonder that a person of his character should send abroad such notions into the world for the dictates of holy Scripture, as are evidently contrary to the tenor of it; unless he thought our nobility and gentry as little acquainted with that book, as some of their guides are said to have thought it fit they should be.

To make a man an idolater, according to the idea this author has given of it, two things are required, which I much question whether they ever yet concurred in any considerable number of men in the world, *viz.*

1. That he give the worship of the supreme God to some created, corporeal, and visible part of the universe.
2. That he give this worship to it, as esteeming such a being to be the supreme God.

I will not be so rude as to inquire by what rules of discourse he infers all this from the second commandment, that because God there forbids the Israelites to make any “graven image, the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth; to bow down before it and worship it;” therefore this image must be the similitude of some visible and corporeal deity; and that deity be supposed to be the supreme God, and be worshipped as such. He that can infer this from the second commandment, would do well to tell us how he does it. But not to be

importunate here ; if this be the true and only idolatry, according to the law, I would desire to know :

First, Seeing the law was delivered by the ministry of angels, and these were no visible and corporeal deities ; what if the Jews had paid divine adoration to them ? Would this have been idolatry according to the law ? If it would, I should be glad to know what part of his definition it is that makes it to be so ?

Secondly, I have before shewn, that the ancient heathens, the Egyptians, Chaldeans, &c. though they worshipped indeed the sun, moon, and stars, yet they neither believed them to be the supreme God, nor the image of the supreme God ; nor that they were only visible and corporeal deities : they looked upon them as the vehicles of celestial spirits, which dwelt in them ; and as such they paid their adoration to them. Now then, was this idolatry by the law, or was it not ? If it were not, how came the Israelites to be charged with idolatry (according to this author's own principles) for joining with them in this service ? If it were, how will this agree with his "true and only notion of idolatry ?" Seeing they worshipped these heavenly bodies neither as the supreme God, nor so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible deity. But,

Thirdly, To come to the holy Scripture itself : we read, 1 Kings xi. 4, "that Solomon in his old age turned away his heart, and worshipped אלהים אחרים other gods, *viz.* Ash-toreth and Milcom, and Chemosh, and Moloch,* *i. e.* according to this learned man's notion, the sun and moon, and I suppose he will not deny that herein he committed idolatry. But now can any one believe that Solomon, who had been so well instructed in the knowledge of the Lord God of Israel ; he to whom God had twice himself appeared ;† and whom he had endued with wisdom above all the men upon the earth : finally, who had, not so long since, built him a magnificent temple at Jerusalem ; where the service of the true God was continued, even whilst he worshipped the gods of his wives : can any one, I say, be so stupid as to believe, that this Solomon gave the worship of the supreme God to the sun and moon, as supposing them to be the supreme deities ; and that he did not only not

* Collat. cum Jos. 24. 2. pag. 93.

† 1 Kings iii. 5. ix. 2.

worship, but likewise not so much as believe the only supreme God? And yet this we must say, if we will allow this author to have given us the true and only notion of idolatry.

Besides, it is certain, that whilst he was engaged in his idolatrous worship, God did not utterly forsake him, but admonished him of it, and threatened him with the loss of his kingdom for serving strange gods; which is inducement enough to conclude, that he had still an apprehension of the true God. If Solomon did immediately upon this admonition give over his impious worship, it shewed evidently that he retained the knowledge of that God who had twice appeared to him. For to suppose that he had quite lost all sense and apprehension of him just when he fell to idolatry, and just recovered some sense of him upon this admonition, and that all the while between, he believed his visible and corporeal deities, or some one of them, to be the supreme God, and had no sense of him who is truly so, is to make Solomon almost such a man as I before shewed our author's idolater to be according to the meaning of his words; I am sure it is not to make him one of the wisest men that ever was in the world. But supposing that Solomon went on for some time after this to worship his strange gods, yet he must now at least have recovered some sense of the true God, it being this admonition, in all likelihood, that sooner or later brought him to repentance; and then our author's principles do from that time that he was admonished, acquit Solomon of all idolatry, though he went on to serve the gods of his wives.

It is a shame to run this matter any farther, and I make no doubt but that I have all men of sense, whether of ours, or of the Roman Church, with me in this matter against our author. But that I may not seem only to destroy his idea, without fixing any other in the room of it; I now proceed to observe, "that we find two sorts of idolatry mentioned in the Old Testament;" and (such is the misfortune of this positive man) both of them utterly destructive of his true and only notion of it, *viz.*

I. *The worshipping of the true God by a material symbol or representation.*

II. *The worshipping of other gods than the God of Israel; and that whether it be so as—1. Utterly to forsake the true God, and serve others only: or, 2. To worship other gods together with him.*

1st. That according to the holy Scripture, it was esteemed idolatry among the Jews to worship the true God by any material symbol or representation.

And of this I shall desire no better proof, than those very instances which this author so much insists upon for the establishing of his notion, *viz.* those of the golden calf, and of the calves of Dan and Bethel. That the children of Israel did commit idolatry in the worship of these, is on all hands agreed: and yet that both these were designed as symbols of the true God, and not of any visible or corporeal deities, will, I think, appear evident, almost to a demonstration, from these following reflections.

1st. That it is “altogether incredible that the Israelites, in either of those cases, could so soon have forgotten the true God, as to give divine worship to visible and corporeal beings, as supposing them to be the supreme deity.”

If we consider their circumstances when they worshipped the “golden calf,” *Exod. xxxii.* it was but a very few days since God had made a very great discovery of himself to them at Mount Horeb, when he gave them the law, and asserted himself to be the Jehovah, their God which had “brought them up out of the land of Egypt,” *Exod. xx. 2.*

And in the case of Jeroboam’s calves; the knowledge of God in which they had been bred up; a continued public service of him at Jerusalem; the feasts and sacrifices, and other ceremonies which they observed in obedience to his command; the very seal of his covenant which they carried about them in their flesh, not to say any thing of the temple which Solomon had so lately built unto him; all these must certainly have made too deep an impression upon their minds, to permit them so suddenly to fall away into such an utter forgetfulness of him, as to worship visible and corporeal deities as the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of him who really is the supreme God. Such an ignorance as this is hardly to be found, even among those infidels that have never had any revelation of the true God at all made to them: but that men who had once been instructed in the knowledge and worship of him, should so suddenly fall off from both, as they must here have done according to this author’s true and only notion of their idolatry, this, I think, is as incredible as the notion itself, which he would prove by the supposition of it. But,

2dly. That the people did not fall into any “such apostasy, but designed in those calves to worship the God of Israel, is

evident from the characters given of that deity whom they served by them."

For as to the golden calf, we read, *Exod. xxxii. 4*, that when it was set up, they cried out, "This is thy God, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt; and Aaron built an altar before it, and made proclamation and said, To-morrow is a feast to Jehovah, or the Lord."

And so Jeroboam, in the very same manner, having set up his calves in Dan and Bethel, *1 Kings xii. 28*, "It is too much for you (said he to the people) to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Now may I desire this learned author to tell us, 1. Where in holy Scripture does he find the name JEHOVAH, or the LORD, attributed to any other but the true God? Or if we should suppose the people to be ignorant in this case, yet could Aaron the high priest be so forgetful, as not to remember that this was that peculiar name which God assumed to himself, *Exod. vi. 3*, and of which our author himself takes notice, p. 80, 81. 2. Whom should they then, and Jeroboam mean after, by the Jehovah that had brought them up "out of the land of Egypt," but him, who, at the delivery of the law, appropriated this character to himself, *Exod. xx. 1*, and who was under that title worshipped by the Jews at Jerusalem, where his temple stood, and whither all the tribes were wont to go up to worship him: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

3. Had Jeroboam hereby designed to set up a new God amongst them, how came it to pass that he used no arguments with them at all as to that matter, but merely remonstrated to them the trouble of going up to Jerusalem to worship? Never sure were people easier persuaded out of their religion than the Ten Tribes, if our author thinks that the distance of place made him choose rather to return to the idolatry of Egypt, than to be at so much pains to worship the true God.

3rdly. But all this will farther appear, in that it is altogether incredible that the Egyptian gods should be the God that delivered the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, and sent all those plagues upon their own servants. But especially that "thick darkness," under which they lay for three days, seems to be a very odd effect for the sun to have wrought. But to quit such suppositions, two things there are, by which it un-

doubtedly appears that the Israelites, in these cases, could not have designed any return to the Egyptian idolatry. For,

1. As to the golden calf, it is said they "offered burnt-offerings, and brought peace-offerings unto it." And Jeroboam sacrificed unto the calves which he had made, and "consecrated priests with a bullock and seven rams" to their service.

Now all this was most agreeable to what God required in his service, but so utterly repugnant to the superstition of the Egyptians, that our author himself confesses God commanded their beasts to be offered in sacrifice to him, in contempt of the sacredness in which they were held by those idolaters. He tells us, "That to offer a young ram was the greatest affront that could be put upon the Egyptians, who held a ram not only in religious esteem, but the most sacred of all their holy animals. And particularly upon the account of the sacredness of these animals, the Egyptians (says he) NEVER OFFERED any of their species in sacrifice. Insomuch, that when Pharaoh bid Moses go sacrifice to the Lord in the land of Egypt, Moses answers, they durst not do it, 'because it would be an abomination to the Egyptians,' Exod. viii. 26, so that they would stone them; that is, it would be a profaneness and open affront to the religion of the Egyptians, if they should offer in sacrifice those very animals that the Egyptians had consecrated in honour of their gods. And for the same reason the Israelites were also commanded to sacrifice young bullocks as well as rams; for that next to a ram, the bullock was the most sacred of all the holy animals."

Our author is very large on this argument; but I think what I have here offered is little less than a demonstration against him as to this point: that the Jews, in the worship of their calves, did not return to the idolatry of Egypt, seeing they offered such sacrifices before them as by his own confession "were an open affront to the religion of the Egyptians."

2ndly, It is evident from holy Scripture, that the idolatry of these calves was a distinct idolatry from that of worshipping the heavenly bodies; and according to the estimate which God himself put upon it, much less heinous. And this we find in both the instances before mentioned. For as to the golden calf, Stephen says, Acts vii. 41, 42, "That they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the work of their hands; then God gave them up to worship the host of heaven." Now here must be a manifest difference

allowed between these two, seeing the one is represented as the punishment of the other ; and what a ridiculous paraphrase would it make of these words, to suppose that they adored the sun in both, *viz.* "That for worshipping the sun under the symbol of the golden calf, God gave them up to worship the sun under the name of Moloch !"

As for Jeroboam's calves, we find this also distinguished from that of worshipping the heavenly host. For thus the idolatry of Ahab was aggravated against him, 1 Kings xvi. 31, that "as if it had been a small thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he went and served Baal, and worshipped him." Now if the idolatry of the golden calves was the worship of the sun too (as this author would have it), then this passage concerning Ahab must be expounded in this manner : "That as if it had been a small thing for him to worship the sun under the calves, he even proceeded to such a height of impiety, as to worship the sun under the name of Baal." But, 4thly, and to conclude this point ; that under the calves they worshipped the true God, is evident from the whole course of the history of the ten tribes, and of the state of religion under them.

We find God as well revealing himself to these, as to the other two. His prophets came amongst them, and though they often inveighed against their altars, yet never charged them as deserters of the God of Israel.

Nay, in many cases, we find those who worshipped the golden calves, yet accepted by God as zealous in his service. I shall, instead of many, offer only one example, that of Jehu, 2 Kings x. 16, who as he was expressly designed by God to be king over Israel, so he there bids Jehonadab "come and see his zeal for the Lord." Now the zeal he there meant, was in destroying of Baal out of Israel. This he most effectually did, as may be seen at large in that chapter ; and for the doing of it, had the throne confirmed by God to his posterity for four generations. I shall therefore make bold to conclude, that Jehu was no worshipper of Baal, or the sun, but of the God of Israel, whose service he promoted, and for whom Elijah not long before had appeared in opposition to this very Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 21 : "How long (says he) halt ye between two opinions ? If the Lord be God, follow him ; but if BAAL, then follow him." And yet Jehu "still worshipped the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan," 2 Kings x. 29, 31. He observed not to walk in the law of the "Lord

God of Israel with ALL HIS HEART, seeing he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin."

I conclude upon the whole, that that cannot be the true and ONLY notion of idolatry, which this author pretends, *viz.* "the giving the worship of the supreme God to some created, corporeal, or visible Deity, as supposing it to be the supreme Deity;" since (as we have now seen) to worship even the true God, under the worship of some corporeal symbol or representation, as the Israelites did in these calves, is, in the account of the holy Scripture, to commit idolatry. I go on,

2ndly, To shew, that to worship any other God, besides the God of Israel, whether it be so as to forsake the true God, or but only to join the worship of any other with him; this is also, according to the sense of holy Scripture, to commit idolatry.

Now this will appear from the examples of this kind of idolatry that occur in those sacred writings; I shall mention only an instance or two in either kind. And,

1st. That to give divine worship to any other than to the God of Israel, though they do not worship that being as the supreme Deity, but, on the contrary, worship the true God together with it, is, according to the censure of the holy Scripture, idolatry.

This was the case of Solomon in some of the last years of his life; for however, at the persuasion of his wives, he neglected very much the service of the true God, yet we do not find that he utterly forsook either the worship or the acknowledgment of him. On the contrary, the holy Scripture plainly enough insinuates, that he still served the God of Israel, and his fault was, that he did not serve him only, but worshipped Moloch, and Chemosh, and Ashtoreth, and Milcom, together with him. For thus speaking of his idolatry, it says, 1 Kings xi. 4, "that his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God:" and again, ver. 6, "that he went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father," *i. e.* he did not wholly give up himself to serve the Lord, and him only, as his father had done.

Another and a more notable instance of this we meet with in 2 Kings xvii. where the king of Assyria, having led the ten tribes into captivity, and planted some of his own subjects in their country, we read, ver. 25, that "God sent lions amongst them to destroy them" because they neglected to worship him. Upon this the king of Assyria, ver. 27, ordered one

of the priests of Bethel to go up and teach them “the manner of the God of the land; then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear or serve the Lord,” ver. 28. “Howbeit every man made gods of their own, and so they feared the Lord, and served their own gods and their graven images.”

Such was the state of these Samaritans, and their practice will furnish us with two very useful remarks upon this occasion. For, 1. Since these Samaritans were punished for not worshipping the God of the country, *i. e.* the God whom the Israelites were wont to worship; it follows, that the God of the Israelites was not the same with the God of the Samaritans; and therefore since these are supposed to have worshipped the sun, it follows that the Israelites did not worship the sun, but some other, and him the true God.

2ndly, That these Samaritans, at the same time that they committed idolatry in serving their own gods, did also both know and fear the true God, and therefore their idolatry could not consist in giving the worship of the supreme God to their created and visible deities, as supposing them so to be. But their sin was, that they gave divine worship to their own false gods, after they had been instructed in the worship of the true, and joined both the one and the other in their religious service. But,

2ndly, As it was therefore thought to be idolatry, to worship any other being together with God, so must it much more have been esteemed so, to forsake the true God, and worship any other corporeal and visible deity.

An instance of this we seem to have in Ahab, 1 Kings xvi. 30, who, seduced by Jezebel his wife, “did evil in the sight of the Lord, above all that were before him;” and what this was we find in the next verse, *viz.* that not content with the idolatry of Jeroboam, in worshipping God after an idolatrous manner, he utterly forsook him, and served Baal, and built a temple and an altar for him.

Now, that Ahab had utterly laid aside the service of the true God, seems evident upon two accounts. 1st. Of the great persecution that he suffered his wife, 1 Kings xviii. 4, to make of the prophets of the Lord, when, as Obadiah tells Elijah, he hid them in caves from her fury. 2ndly. From the miserable state of the kingdom in that time, as we find Elijah reporting it even to God himself, 1 Kings xix. 14: “The

children of Israel," says he, "have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away."

Indeed it is not to be doubted, but that the idolatry of this time was very deplorable. But now wherein did it consist? Did Ahab worship Baal, or the sun, as a corporeal deity, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a superior, spiritual, and invisible Godhead? This is not credible, seeing throughout his whole reign we find him corresponding upon all occasions with the prophets of the LORD, and therefore sure he could not be without some sense and apprehension of him.

And what I have now shewn in the example of Ahab, I will yet farther confirm in another, that will perhaps be liable to less exception, and that is the instance of Manasseh, king of Judah. This king, not content to forsake the God of his fathers, set up his idolatry in the very temple of the Lord; but yet neither had he lost all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead. He had been bred up by his father in the knowledge of the true God, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10, the prophets of the Lord still continued to put him in mind of his danger, and no sooner did he feel the punishment of his rebellion, but he returned to his God, ver. 12: "When he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers."

And thus have I taken a short view of the several sorts of idolatry which occur in the Old Testament, and from thence it appears, that this sin is consistent not only with the acknowledgment, but even with the worship of the true supreme Deity, and therefore that it is a very false account which this author has here given of it, p. 74, *viz.* "That idolatry is neither more nor less than the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity as the supreme God:" or, as he elsewhere defines it, pp. 80, 81, "That idolatry is the giving the worship of the supreme God to any created, corporeal, or visible deity; and to suppose such a being the supreme Deity, is the only, true and proper idolatry."

But before I quit this point, it may not be amiss to observe yet one instance more of idolatry (I am sure generally supposed to be so), and which I cannot tell whether it may properly be reduced to any of the foregoing kinds, and it is that of the brazen serpent, to which the children of Israel burnt

incense in Hezekiah's time, as we may see, 2 Kings xviii. 4. This pious king observing their superstition, caused it to be broke into pieces, and we find this recorded among the rest of his enterprises for rooting idolatry out of his country: "He removed the high-places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan."

I do not believe that even this author himself will have the confidence to say, that this was an image of either the sun, moon, or stars, or of any other visible and corporeal deity, or that the people worshipped it as supposing it to be the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead; and yet the learned men on both sides confess, that here was idolatry committed, though it may be the people were far from thinking that they did so; and then it will remain, "That to give any appropriate acts of divine worship to any creature, whatever sense men have of the thing to which they give them, or their intention be in so doing, is nevertheless esteemed by God to be idolatry."

CHAP. V.

The objections against the notion of Idolatry laid down in the foregoing chapter, considered and refuted.

SINCE I first began the examination of this book, I have been under some temptations to doubt, whether the author of it really designed to serve the interest of those of the Church of Rome in the writing of it, or by a seeming defence of their idolatry, intended only to shew how little he could say in their behalf, and to give us an occasion, by answering his arguments, to convince the world upon what just grounds we advance that charge against them.

It does indeed a little startle me, when I consider how base a thing it is, and unbecoming the character of a Christian, to put on only an appearance of zeal in behalf of a party, to whom it must be confessed, he has been highly obliged, and whom therefore if he could not serve, yet at least he ought not

to have betrayed. But then it seems to be something worse, I do not now say for a Christian, but for a bishop that has not yet quitted either the revenues or the communion of the Church of England, nor retracted the subscription he once made of this very charge of idolatry, against those for whom he would now be thought to plead; to revile that Church which nourishes him, and whose opinions we must suppose him to hold, till we see him as formally renounce them as ever he once subscribed to them. And if on the one hand he seems to shew a great deal of bitterness against us in his expressions, yet on the other, it must be confessed his arguments are so extremely civil, as not to carry so much as the appearance of religion in them. And few of the Romanists have ever undertaken this cause, that have not said a great deal more in their own defence, than this amphibious advocate has offered for them.

But whether this author designed to expose them or us, or himself only, as I am not much concerned to know, so neither will I undertake to determine. This is plain, that had he meant to ridicule the Church of Rome never so much, he could not have taken a more effectual way of doing it. And whether our nobility do (p. 4), or can, or ought to understand transubstantiation or no, yet I am sure, men of much weaker capacities than those honourable personages for the most part are, will be able to discern the truth of this remark. And that he must indeed have thought them not only incapable of judging of abstruse propositions (p. *ib.*), but even destitute of common sense and reason, if he hoped to impose such discourse as this upon them for arguing.

Now to make this appear, I shall need only desire the reader to observe with me these two things:

I. That the position he undertakes to defend (p. 74), is, "That the notion of idolatry in holy Scripture is neither *more* nor *less* than this; the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity, as the supreme God, so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead."

II. That to prove this, it is not sufficient to shew that this is idolatry, or that the Jews did sometimes fall into it: but it must be shewn, that they never committed any other idolatry; and particularly, that this was the idolatry of the golden calf, and of the calves of Dan and Bethel. For though the worship of the heavenly bodies (as the author represents it) were

one sort of idolatry, yet if the Scripture has charged the Jews with this guilt for any other worship, wherein they did not adore the sun, moon, and stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity as the supreme God, it will then follow, that this which is alleged (p. 81, 82), cannot be the ONLY notion of idolatry, and it must be false to assert, that idolatry (p. 74), according to the word of God, is neither more nor less than this.

Now from these two remarks only, it will presently appear, what slender pretences some men will take up with, to run out into the most excessive clamours against those whom they oppose. For, 1st, As to what he so largely insists upon (p. 83), as if there were something very important at the bottom of it, *viz.* “That the Jews were a people prone to idolatry, and that the design of God throughout the whole law, was to preserve them from it;” though it be a great truth, yet it is certainly in this place a great impertinence; seeing neither do we deny this, nor can he make any use of it in establishing his true and only notion of idolatry: for I hope he did not intend to argue thus, “The Jews were very prone to idolatry, and God intended this law to restrain them from it; therefore idolatry is neither more nor less than the worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, as the supreme Deity.”

2ndly. It will from hence appear, that all those passages of holy Scripture where God charges the Jews with worshipping other gods, with serving the host of heaven, &c. conclude nothing, seeing it is confessed that they did fall into this idolatry too; but that does not hinder but that they may have fallen into some other besides; and we are assured that so they did; nay, that they were suffered by God to fall into this, as a punishment for having committed the other: so St. Stephen expressly tells us, Acts vii. 41, 42: “They made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the work of their hands. Then God gave them up to worship the host of heaven.”

Nor is it any more to the purpose (p. 29), 3rdly, to prove that the Scripture says, “That to worship the sun and moon is idolatry;” unless he could find out some text where it adds “that they who worshipped the sun and moon, worshipped them as visible and corporeal deities with the honour due to the supreme God; and so as to exclude all sense and apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead; and that this is

the true and only idolatry." But now this, which was the only point in question, he has prudently forgot, and whilst he lives will never be able to prove it.

In short, if there be any thing more than noise and show in what he has said, it must be in his account of the two points before considered, *viz.* the golden calf, and the calves of Dan and Bethel: for as for the brazen serpent, and the honour paid to that, he is as silent as if there had been no such thing in his Bible.

For the former of these, the golden calf, he expatiates very much, but sure never were words put together with less pertinence than here. The thing to be proved is (p. 84, 85, &c.), "That the Jews intended by this calf to worship the Egyptian Apis or Serapis, or Osiris, that is, the sun, as the supreme Deity."

But how does he go about to prove this? First, he learnedly shews, that the Apis whom the Egyptians worshipped was not the king of the Argives, nor son to Jupiter. And this I think may be foreign enough to what we are seeking, which is the design of the Jews in setting up the golden calf. Secondly, he assures us (p. 87), it is much more probable that the Greeks borrowed the very word Apis from the Egyptians. And thereupon he takes occasion to make a learned reflection upon our translation of Jeremiah xlv. 15, which it may be was one of the passages for which he has been wont to censure our version with as little modesty as understanding. For to say no more of it than this, if we have rendered this verse amiss, we have erred not only with all the learned versions, the Syriac, the Chaldee Paraphrase, and even the Vulgar Latin itself, but with the original Hebrew too; and in all which there is this only difference, that what they call *valiant* in one number, we render *valiant men* in the other. And all this is still as impertinent to the point in hand, as any thing can be well imagined to be.

And yet from this, thirdly, he boldly infers (p. *ibid.*), "That the calf must have been the symbol of some Egyptian idol, and that the people thinking themselves betrayed or deserted by Moses after forty days' absence, forced Aaron to restore to them the symbols of their old gods to go before them, instead of this new God which seemed to have deserted them." And this indeed is pertinent, but it has another terrible defect, *viz.* that it wants proof. In short, the only reason he has to offer for what he says, is this: "that all their other worship seems

to have been forced and constrained, but this is free and voluntary: and that there could be no other ground of that great joy they shewed on this occasion, but that they were restored to the exercise of their former religion." And to this I have many things to reply.

First, That this is at best but a plausible presumption, and such as if compared with the reasons I have alleged to the contrary, will not be thought to deserve the name of an argument. For,

Secondly, Whereas this author (always positive, if that might pass for proof) says, "that there could be no other ground of this joy, than that they were restored to the worship of their old gods;" I would fain know how he comes to be assured of this? I am confident, were it fit to establish a principle of this moment upon the sandy foundation of our own conjectures, one might be able to find out other reasons for it. For why might not they have had just cause of rejoicing, to behold a symbol of their own God set up amongst them, as well as if it had been a figure of an Egyptian idol? What if despairing of Moses's return to them, as they designed this symbol to supply his place, to direct them in their journey, and to be an oracle at which they might continually inquire God's pleasure, so they testified some transports of joy upon the erecting of it. Nay, but,

Thirdly, What if we should say that we cannot discern any such extraordinary joy, more than what the solemnity of a feast dedicated to the JEHOVAH, for the setting up of a visible symbol of his presence amongst them, might very well warrant? The case in short was this: Moses delayed to come down from the Mount, the people were impatient to continue on their journey towards the Promised Land; but how to learn God's pleasure they knew not, and for this purpose they cried unto Aaron, that he would make them a god to go before them; such as very probably they had seen in Egypt, and which might serve instead of an oracle unto them. This Aaron makes, and for the dedication of it appoints a feast unto the Lord, and offers such sacrifices as God indeed required, but which this author himself confesses, were an abomination to the Egyptians. And upon the occasion of this feast it was that it is said, "they rejoiced in the works of their hands," Acts vii. 41. And again, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play," 1 Cor. x. 7. And what this joy was, we find particularly expressed, Exod. xxxii. 19: "They

were singing and dancing before the calf." Now all this was very natural on such an occasion; and whatever sin they committed in it, yet I cannot see any necessity there is to conclude that there could be no other ground for such a joy, than their returning to the idols of Egypt. And the arguments I have before given clearly shew, that whatever it was, it could not be that, seeing that the whole solemnity was consecrated to the JEHOVAH, and performed in a manner utterly inconsistent with the Egyptian idolatry.

As for the calves of Dan and Bethel, our author has (if possible) yet less to say against their being the symbols of the God of Israel, than he had in the former case. He produces (p. 93) only the learned Visorius, to prove that Monceius was mistaken in imagining that Jeroboam set up these calves in imitation of Solomon's cherubim. But now this is not our question, whether the calves were made in imitation of the cherubim, but whether the God of Israel, or the gods of Egypt were worshipped by the Ten Tribes at Dan and Bethel? And yet without saying one pertinent word, he concludes, with as good assurance as if he had made a demonstration of it: "So that it is plain that these calves were set up by him as idols, or symbols of a new or separate religion from the tribe of Judah."

One thing indeed there is that may seem to deserve an answer, and that is, why the people for three whole years did not comply with him, if he kept up the old religion, that had been established under David and Solomon? But now this is a gross mistake in a person that would be thought so learned in the Scriptures. The people did comply very readily with Jeroboam, and were far from refusing for any such time as pretended. And that passage to which this author must, I suppose, refer, 2 Chron. xi. 17, is spoken not of the Israelites, but of the kingdom of Judah; namely, "that for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon."

And now let any reasonable man consider what a pitiful vindication is this, to support so much clamour and confidence? And how must all men of sense, even in the Roman communion, despise such trifling, after what they have seen their own Dr. Godden perform upon this very subject? The truth is, we ought to give that learned man his due. He has said what was to be said to excuse his Church from idolatry; and his performance shews that he wanted nothing but a better cause to have acquitted himself to every one's satisfaction. But he

had a hard mistress to serve, and he was not insensible of it. But for this new advocate, his arguments are as much short of the Doctor's, as his assurance is greater. There the D. of Paul's found something worthy his consideration, but here is nothing but a great noise, and a great deal of anger and scorn, without any just occasion, though in such a case the cause ought to be very plain. In short, I cannot imagine any other effect this discourse can possibly have, than to raise the credit of Dr. Godden's; and after whom it is indeed a bold undertaking for another to engage: for could this point have been defended, he was the person that of any other seems to have been the most likely to have done it. But he too has failed; and because his performance was good, considering the matter of it, the worth of the man argues the badness of the cause, and the impossibility of defending it.

CHAP. VI.

That the account which has been given of the notion of Idolatry under the Law, is equally applicable to the case of the Christians now. The objection from the cherubims answered; and the whole concluded.

I AM now come to the last point to be considered, and it is indeed so necessarily consequent upon the foregoing, that if what I have before said concerning the notion of idolatry under the Old Testament be allowed, this cannot be denied, *viz.* that as the Jews retaining both the apprehension and worship of the truly supreme God, were nevertheless guilty of idolatry, for worshipping him after a Gentile manner, so may Christians be now, and therefore that the Church of Rome may justly be charged by us as idolatrous, though we do not pretend in any wise to say either that she worships the sun, moon, and stars, or any other visible and corporeal deity as the supreme God, or that she has lost all apprehension of a spiritual and invisible Godhead.

I shall not much enlarge myself upon the proof of a consequence, both in itself very plain, and which this author is so far from denying, that his whole book is built upon the

supposal that he makes of the truth of it; it is indeed the only thing wherein he seems to have any reason, nor can any thing be more just than for the understanding what idolatry is, to search the holy Scriptures, and see what is there declared to be so.

As for the New Testamant, we find the Apostles earnest indeed in their cautions against idolatry, but we do not see that they any where defined the nature of it: they spake as to men who understood these things, and were acquainted with the notion of idolatry, and needed only to be warned against falling into it. They give not the least intimation that it was not the same then, it had been wont to do under their law. All we can conclude from their exhortations to the Christians to avoid it, is, that Christians were capable of falling into it, and by consequence, that men who have not lost all sense and apprehension of a supreme, spiritual, and invisible Godhead, may for all that become idolaters.

So that to know what the Scripture notion of idolatry is, we must with this author search into the history of the Old Testament, and from thence I have shewn two cases, wherein men may, without excluding either the "sense or worship of the true God," yet justly be charged with this crime. 1. By worshipping the true God by any corporeal image or representation. 2. By giving divine worship to any other besides God, though they do not only retain the notion, but even the adoration too of the true God together with it.

It were an easy matter to enlarge upon both these points here in the application of them; but my design now is not to accuse any particular Church of this guilt, but only to shew in general what idolatry itself is, and that the Church of Rome, though it both knows and worships the true God, yet may do it in such a manner, and give such worship to other beings, as justly to deserve the censure which has been brought against her, for any thing this author has said to clear her of it.

Indeed, as to the former of these ways, whereby I pretend a man may be guilty of idolatry, *viz.* "by worshipping God by any corporeal image or representation," he has offered somewhat in prejudice of it, p. 125, 127. For did not "God himself command two cherubims to be made, and used in his worship? And were not these sacred images set up in the place of worship? And does not this shew that God was so far from forbidding the use of images in his service, that he would not be worshipped without them?"

But to this I answer, that God did indeed command two cherubims to be made and placed at the two ends of the mercy seat ; but that they were put there for any use to be made of them in his service, or for any other purpose than to overshadow the mercy seat, from whence God had promised to deliver his oracles unto them, this we utterly deny.

Hence we find, that when God had directed Moses how to make this throne of his glory, Exod. xxv. 22, he commanded him, “to put the mercy seat above upon the ark of the testimony, and there (says he) I will meet thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark.” And, Numb. vii. 89, it is said, “that when Moses went into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with God, he heard the voice of one speaking to him from off the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims.” Now here we may plainly see what the object of divine worship was, not the cherubim, but the invisible majesty which spake from between them, and communed with Moses. The mercy seat itself was but the place where God had promised to meet them ; the cherubim were the ornament and covering of that ; but neither the one nor the other of these were the object of divine worship, or figures, or similitudes of that God who alone was adored there.

And this the learned men of the Church of Rome confess no less than we ; Aquinas* having objected against the second commandment, that the cherubim were put in the tabernacle and in the temple, answers, that they were neither put there as representations of God, nor for any worship to be paid to them ; and explaining the ark and all that belonged to it as a mystery, he says, that the holy of holies represented heaven ; the ark was the footstool of the Divine Majesty ; but that because God was incomprehensible to any creature, *propter hoc nulla similitudo ejus ponebatur*, therefore was there no similitude of him placed there the better to denote his invisibility. As for the cherubim, he says they represented the multitude of angels attending upon his throne ; and there was therefore more than one, that all worship might be excluded from them, to whom it had been commanded “that they should worship only one God.” So far was Aquinas from thinking that these images were any representations of God,

* Aquinas 12. Q. 102. Art. 4. ad 6. [Sum. Theol. prim. sec. vol. 21. p. 447, &c. Venet. 1787.]

or that any worship was to be paid to them ; and the same has been confessed by others of no less note of that Church, Vasquez, Lorinus, Azorius, and even by his own Vistorius, whom he has before alleged, but is not pleased to take notice of on this occasion.

But here our author supposes he has something to boast of ; for if we may believe him, our own great defender of this charge has given up the cause as to this matter, and confessed that it was lawful to worship towards an image (p. 130), but not to give worship to one. This is, I fear, a wilful perverting of that learned man's words. The question was about the "Jews' adoration towards the ark, and the holy of holies." His answer is this, "that they only directed their worship towards the place where God had promised to be signally present among them, which," says he, "signifies no more to the worship of images, than lifting up our eyes to heaven doth when we pray, because God is more especially present there." What is there in all this, to allow it to be lawful to give worship towards an image, but not to it ? Nay, he plainly denied that there were any images for worship there, or any worship directed towards them. But there was a symbol of God's immediate presence as on his throne between the cherubim, and this appointed by God himself, and thither the people directed their worship ; and I desire this author, if he can, to tell me what there was more in this, than there is in directing our worship towards heaven, when we pray : and whether, according to his true and only notion of idolatry, he may not as well say, that we worship Apis, or Baal, or Moloch, *i. e.* the sun, moon, and stars, in this, as that the Jews worshipped the cherubim by that ?

Nor is there any more sincerity in what he calls his second reply, and in which he represents him as allowing "that the cherubim might be adored once a year by the high priest, but not exposed to the people to worship." For in that very place he denies the cherubim to have been any representations of God : but says, "that his throne was between them on the mercy seat ;" and adds in plain words, "that they were never intended for objects of worship." And yet this author insults and triumphs upon this in a very glorious manner, as if the cause had been gained by it. Had that learned man said, "that the high priest adored the cherubim once a year," then indeed there might have been some colour for those sweet expressions of shameless shifts and pretences. But this he

utterly denied, and he might as well have made him confess it to be lawful to worship images, though he disputed against it, and have brought him in allowing that it was no idolatry so to do, as to represent him confessing that the "high priest adored the cherubim once every year." But what defence can there be against such adversaries, as will make men confess what they reject, and affirm what they deny; and yet when they have done, dare to appeal both to God and the world for their sincerity?

And now from what has been said, I will venture to conclude in behalf of our Church, and of those learned men of our communion, who have been concerned in this controversy, that the notion of idolatry which both the one teaches, and the others have defended, is, after all this author's clamours against it, neither new nor unlearned, nor fanatical, nor anti-catholic, nor anti-Christian, nor any of those ill things he pretends; but the truly ancient, learned, and catholic notion of it. The notion which God in his holy Word has established; which the Jews received; the Apostles taught, and the Christian Church till these latter days, that men's interest prompted them to seek out to themselves new inventions, constantly maintained. It was by this notion that St. Paul censured the worship of the golden calf as idolatrous, and condemned the Gentile world of the same crime, Rom. i. 21, 23: "That though they knew God, yet they did not glorify him as God, but changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

This was the notion that made our forerunners in the faith choose rather to suffer martyrdom, than to give religious worship to any creature whatsoever. And whatever this author thinks of those primitive saints, I am confident he will find but very few besides, that will believe they sacrificed their lives to their folly and passion, and died only to defend a mistaken notion of idolatry.

It was this notion upon which the ancient Fathers condemned the Arians of idolatry; they did not believe Christ to be either the sun or moon, or any other visible or corporeal Deity, or the image of the supreme and invisible Godhead. They believed him to be the most divine and excellent being after God, only they denied that he was co-eternal and co-equal with the Father; and yet those holy, orthodox Fathers censured them as idolaters, because supposing him to be a creature, they worshipped him as a God.

And upon the very same notion it is that the Reformed Churches have ever looked upon the worship of images and saints in the Church of Rome, as deserving the very same censure ; and I cannot but wonder that this author should charge the invention of this notion upon a person now living, which he must needs have known both our Church and the writers of it have constantly asserted, before any of this generation ever saw the light.

I should now add somewhat in answer to those bitter reflections he has made upon the same reverend person, whom he seems to have resolved at any rate to run down : but though the charge be severe, yet it is so inartificially laid, as plainly shews there was no Ahithophel in the contrivance ; and I will only say, that whoso shall consider the little credit he had in those days, to which this author refers, with them whom himself looks upon as the contrivers and managers of that plot which he would be thought to lay to his charge, will soon discover a great deal of ill-will utterly ruined, for want of a little skill in the management of it.

But we ought not to wonder, if he who in the beginning of his discourse flew out into such violence against all the abettors of this charge, as a company of fanatic, antimonarchical villains, has in the close thought fit to fix some particular marks of his displeasure upon the last and most learned assertor of it. This was the least he could do to make amends for the misfortune of approving and licensing that very book which was written in defence of this charge. And it is well for us that there are some men in the world, who, as Ulpian tells us, can do no injury, *sive pulsent sive convicium dicant*.

How far this author may be reckoned in the number of these, I shall leave the final result of his judgment in this case to satisfy the world, *viz.* "That idolatry made the plot, and the plot made idolatry, and the same persons made both." For whether this can be the result of any man's judgment that is well in his head, I shall leave it to those who have no distempers there to determine.

But he has delivered himself, "as he will answer for his integrity to God and the world." To this judgment I now leave him : and though I fear it to be too late to provide against the sentence of the last, yet I heartily pray he may consider what he has done, and how he will stand in judgment before the other.

BOOK II.

THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF ROME JUSTLY CON- DEMNED AS TO THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

A DISCOURSE OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

THE Sacrifice of the Mass is the most considerable part of worship in the Roman Church ; it is their *Juge sacrificium*, their daily and continual offering, and the principal thing in which their religion does consist ; it is, they tell us, of the greatest profit and advantage to all persons, and I am sure their priests make it so to themselves ; for by this alone a great number of them get their livings, by making merchandise of the holy sacrament, and by selling the blood of Christ at a dearer rate than Judas once did. The saying of masses keeps the Church of Rome more priests in pay, than any prince in Christendom can maintain soldiers ; and it has raised more money by them, than the richest bank or exchequer in the world was ever owner of ; it is indeed the truest patrimony of their Church, and has enriched it more than any thing else ; it was that which founded their greatest monasteries, and their abbeys, and it had well nigh brought all the estates of this kingdom into the Church, had not the statutes of Mortmain put a check to it ; the donation of Constantine, were it never so true, and the grants of Charles and Pepin, were they never so large, and the gifts of all their benefactors put together, are infinitely outdone by it ; the gain of it has been so manifestly great, that one cannot but upon that account a little suspect its godliness, but yet if it could fairly be made out to be a true part of religion, it were by no means to be rejected for that accidental though shameful abuse of it ; it is accounted by them the greatest, and the most useful and comfortable part of Christian worship, and if it be so, it is a great defect in us that want it ; they charge us very high for being without it, without a sacrifice, which no religion (they tell us) in the world ever

was before. And one amongst them of great learning, and some temper in other things, yet upon this occasion asks, "whether it can be doubted, where there is no sacrifice there can be any religion?"* We, on the other side, account it a very great corruption of the Eucharist, to turn that which is a sacrament to be received by us, into a sacrifice to be offered to God; and there being no foundation for any such thing in Scripture, but the whole ground of it being an error and mistake, as we shall see anon, and it being a most bold and daring presumption to pretend properly to sacrifice Christ's body again, which implies no less than to murder and crucify him; we therefore call it a blasphemous fable,† and as it is made use of to deceive people into the vain hopes of receiving benefit by the communion without partaking of it, and a true pardon of sin by way of price and recompense is attributed to it, and it is made as truly propitiatory as Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, both for the dead and living, and for that purpose is scandalously bought and sold, so that many are hereby cheated not only of their money, but of their souls too, it is to be feared, who trust too much to this easy way of having a great many masses said for them, and because when the priest pretends to do those two great things in the mass, to turn the bread and wine into the very substance of Christ's body and blood, and then to offer Christ up again to his Father as truly as he offered himself upon the cross (which are as great as the greatest works which ever God did at the very creation and redemption of the world), yet that he really does no such thing as he then vaunts and boasts of: for these reasons we deem it no less than a dangerous deceit.‡

These are high charges on both sides, and it concerns those who make them to be well assured of the grounds of them. And here I cannot but passionately resent the sad state of Christianity, which will certainly be very heavy upon those who have been the cause of it, when the corruptions of it are so great, and the divisions so wide about that which is one of the most sacred and the most useful parts of it, the blessed Eucharist; which is above any other the most sadly depraved and perverted, as if the devil had hereby shewn his utmost malice and

* An dubitari potest, ubi nullum peculiare Sacrificium, ibi ne Religionem quidem esse posse? Canus in loc. Theol. l. 12. p. 813.

† See Article 31 of the 39 Articles of Religion.

‡ See Article 31 of the 39 Articles of Religion.

subtlety to poison one of the greatest fountains of Christianity, and to make that which should yield the waters of life, to be the cup of destruction. That blessed sacrament which was designed to unite Christians, is made the very bone of contention, and the greatest instrument to divide them ; and that bread of life is turned into a stone, and become the great rock of offence between them. Besides the lesser corruptions of the Eucharist in the Church of Rome, such as using thin wafers instead of bread, and injecting them whole into the mouths of the communicants, and consecrating without a prayer, and speaking the words of consecration secretly, and the like ; there are four such great ones as violate and destroy the very substance and essence of the sacrament, and make it to be quite another thing than Christ ever intended it, and therefore such as make communion with the Roman altar utterly sinful and unlawful : these are, the adoration of the host, or making the sacrament an object of divine worship ; the communion in one kind, or taking away the cup from the people ; the turning the sacrament into a true and proper sacrifice propitiatory for the quick and dead ; and the using of private or solitary masses, wherein the priest who celebrates communicates alone. The two former of these have been considered in some late discourses upon those subjects ; the fourth is a result and consequence of the third ; for when the sacrament was turned into a sacrifice, the people left off the frequent communicating, and expected to be benefited by it another way ; so that this will fall in as to the main reasons of it, with what I now design to consider and examine, the sacrifice of the mass or altar, wherein the priest every time he celebrates the communion, is supposed to offer to God the body and blood of Christ under the forms of bread and wine, as truly as Christ once offered himself upon the cross, and that this is as truly a proper and propitiatory sacrifice as the other, and that it is so not only for the living, but also for the dead. The objections we make against it, and the arguments by which they defend it, will fall in together at the same time, and I shall endeavour fairly and impartially to represent them in their utmost strength, that so what we have to say against it, and what they have to say for it, may be offered to the reader at one view, that he may the better judge of those high charges which are made, he sees, on each side.

First then, we say, that the very foundation of this sacrifice of the mass, is established upon two very great errors and mistakes : the one is, the doctrine of transubstantiation, or Christ's corporeal presence in the eucharist : the other is the

opinion, that Christ did offer up his body and blood as a sacrifice to God in his last supper, before he offered up himself upon the cross: if either or both of these prove false, the sacrifice of the mass is so far from being true, that it must necessarily fall to the ground, according to their own principles and acknowledgments.

Secondly, There is no Scripture ground for any such sacrifice, but it is expressly contrary to Scripture; under which head I shall examine all their Scriptural pretences for it, and produce such places as are directly contrary to it, and perfectly overthrow it.

Thirdly, That it has no just claim to antiquity, nor was there any such doctrine or practice in the Primitive Church.

Fourthly, That it is in itself unreasonable and absurd, and has a great many gross errors involved in it.

First, We say, that the very foundation of this sacrifice is established upon two very great errors and mistakes; the first of which is the doctrine of transubstantiation, or, which may be sufficient enough for their purpose, the corporeal presence of Christ's body and blood in the eucharist, though they disclaim the belief of this without the other: but if Christ's body and blood be not substantially present under the species of bread and wine, they have no subject matter for a sacrifice, for it is not the bread and wine which they pretend to offer, nor the bare species and accidents of those, nor can they call them a proper propitiatory sacrifice, but it is the very natural body and blood of Christ, under the species of bread and wine, or together with them, for they with the species make one entire subject for sacrifice, and one entire object for adoration, as they are forced to confess;* so that, according to their own principles, they must both sacrifice and adore something in the eucharist besides the very body and blood of Christ, which is a difficulty they will never get off; but I design not to press them with that now, but transubstantiation, upon which their sacrifice of the mass is founded, is so great a difficulty, that it bears down before it all sense and reason, and only makes way for Church authority to triumph over both: their wisest men have given up Scripture for it, and frankly confessed, it were not necessary to believe it without the determination of the Church; and if so, then without the Church's determination, there had been

* *Panis et Corpus Domini, Vinum et Sanguis Domini, non sunt duo sacrificia, sed unum,—— neque enim offerimus Corpus Domini absolutè, sed offerimus Corpus Domini in specie Panis.* Bellarm. de Miss. l. 1. c. 37. [c. 27.] [vol. 3. p. 458. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

no foundation, it seems, for the sacrifice of the mass : for there can be none for that without transubstantiation ; and it is very strange that a sacrifice should be thus founded, not upon Scripture, or a Divine institution, but only in effect upon the Church's declaration, and should have no true bottom without that, as, according to those men, it really has not. But transubstantiation is a monster that startles and affrights the boldest faith, if the Church be not by to encourage and support it ; it is too terrible to be looked upon in itself, without having a thick mist of Church authority and infallibility first cast before a man's eyes, and then if there were not a strange and almost fascinating power in such principles, one would think it impossible that any man, who has both eyes and brains in his head should believe a wafer were the body of a man, or that a crumb of bread were a fleshly substance ; they do not indeed believe them to be both, but they believe one to be the other, which is the same thing ; there is nothing can expose such a doctrine, for nothing can be more uncouth and extravagant than itself ; it not only takes away all evidence of sense, upon which all truth of miracles, and so of all revelation, does depend, but it destroys all manner of certainty, and all the principles of truth and knowledge ; it makes one body be a thousand, or at least be at the same time in a thousand places, by which means the least atom may fill the whole world. Again, it makes the parts of a body to penetrate one another, by which means all the matter of the whole world may be brought to a single point ; it makes the whole to be no greater than a part, and one part to be as great as the whole ; thus it destroys the nature of things, and makes a body to be a spirit, and an accident to be a substance, and renders every thing we see or taste to be only phantasm and appearance ; and though the world seems crowded with solids, yet according to that, it may be all but species, and shadow, and superficies. So big is this opinion with absurdities, and inconsistencies, and contradictions, and yet these must all go down and pass into an article of faith, before there can be any foundation for the sacrifice of the mass ; and let any one judge, that has not lost his judgment by believing transubstantiation, what a strange production that must be, which is to be the genuine offspring of such a doctrine. It is not my province, nor must it be my present task to discourse at large of that, or to confute the little sophistries with which it is thought necessary to make it outface the common reason of mankind. There never was any paradox needed more straining

to defend it, nor any sceptical principle but would bear as fair a wrangle on its behalf. There is a known treatise has so laid this cause on its back, that it can never be able to rise again; and though after a long time it endeavours a little to stir, and heave, and struggle, yet if it thereby provokes another blow from the same hand, it must expect nothing less than its mortal wound.

I pass to the next error and mistake upon which the sacrifice of the mass is founded, and that is this: that our blessed Saviour did at his last supper, when he celebrated the communion with his disciples, offer up his body and blood to his Father as a true propitiatory sacrifice, before he offered it as such upon the cross. This they pretend, and are forced to do so, to establish their sacrificing in the mass: for they are only to do that in the sacrament, they own, which Christ himself did, and which he commanded his Apostles to do; and if this sacrifice had not its institution and appointment at that time, it never had any at all, as they cannot but grant. Let us then inquire, whether Christ did thus sacrifice himself, and offer up his body and blood to God at his last supper: is there any the least colour or shadow of any such thing in any of the accounts that are given of this in the three Evangelists, or in St. Paul? "The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and gave thanks, or blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you, this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins." Is here any mention, or any intimation of offering up anything to God? Was not the bread and the cup, and what he called his body and his blood, given to his disciples to be eaten and drank by them? and was anything else done with them? is there anything like an offering or a sacrificing of them? Yes, say they, Christ there calls it his "body which is broken, and his blood which is shed," in the present tense; therefore the one must be then broken, and the other shed; so indeed it is in the original Greek, though in the vulgar Latin it is in the future tense, and so it is also put in their Missal, *Sanguis qui effundetur*, "this is my blood which shall be shed;" and is it not usual to put the present tense instead of the future, when that is so near and certain? Does not our Saviour do it more than once at

other times? "The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners," παραδίδοται, Matth. xxvi. 45, before he was so, though Judas was then nigh and coming about it. So John x. 17, "I lay down my life," τίθημι τὴν ψυχὴν, when he was ready to do so: as he was to have his body broken, and his blood shed, when he was prepared as a victim to be offered the next day. So St. Paul says, Ἐγὼ ἡδὴ σπένδομαι, "I now offer up myself," 2 Tim. iv. 6, when, as we translate it, "he was ready to be offered." That Christ here used the present tense for the future, is owned by Cardinal Cajetan,* and other learned men† of the Roman Church; and Jansenius‡ says, "the pouring out of the blood is rightly understood of the pouring it out upon the cross."

Christ's body was not broke, nor his blood poured out till the next day; nor did he offer up himself as a sacrifice to his Father until then; Christ did not then command his Apostles to offer him up in the eucharist, when he bade them "do this:" *Hoc facite* does not signify to sacrifice, nor will it be supposed, I hope, our Saviour did then use the vulgar Latin; the phrase in Virgil, *cum faciam Vitula*, which is always quoted to this purpose, shews it only to be so meant, when the occasion or subject matter does require it; but in our Saviour's words, it plainly refers to those acts of taking bread and breaking it, and taking wine and blessing it, and then giving or distributing of them, as he had done just before, and as he commanded them "to do in remembrance of him;" and that it does not relate to sacrificing, is plain from St. Paul, who applies it particularly to drinking the cup, "do this as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me," 1 Cor. xi. 25. That the Apostles were made priests by Christ at his last supper, by those words, *hoc facite*, "do this," is so precarious and senseless an opinion, that it only shews what wonderful straits and extremities our adversaries are driven to, who are forced to espouse this to support their ill-framed hypothesis about the holy eucharist, in those two doctrines of the communion in one kind, and the sacrifice of the mass. There is not one Father, or ancient interpreter, that gives any the least countenance to it, and many of their own authors are ashamed of it, as may be seen in a late discourse of the communion in one kind, p. 15, where this is so fully exposed, that I shall here say no more of it, but that if those words make the Apostles priests, it makes

* In Luc. 22.

† Sa Barrad.

‡ Concord. 131.

them so twice, for they are twice repeated by our Saviour after giving the cup, as well as after giving the bread, as St. Paul witnesseth, 1 Cor. xi. 25, and so the character of priesthood must be double, and they must be twice ordained at the same time, when there is nothing appears like any ordination at all: but if they were then made priests, they were not made so to sacrifice Christ's body and blood, or to do more than he did at that time; and so this is nothing to the purpose, if he himself did not then truly offer and sacrifice himself, which is the plainest thing in the world he did not. And what should make any man imagine that Christ's body was broke, and his blood shed at his last supper; or that he then sacrificed and offered up himself, I cannot conceive. Had he been no otherwise sacrificed, nor his body any otherwise broken, nor his blood in any other way shed besides this, the Jews had been liable to much less guilt, but mankind had been in a more wretched condition; for Christ had not redeemed them, had he not died for them on the cross. If the sacrifice of Christ at his last supper, the night before his crucifixion, was a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice, what needed he have suffered the next day, if that was of the same nature and value with the other, as they say, and did truly propitiate God, and procure pardon and remission of sins for mankind, what need was there of the cross of Christ? It was hereby made void and of none effect, or at least of no necessity. If Christ had done the work without it, his sacrifice upon the altar or the table might have excused his sacrifice upon the cross, and thus the bitter cup might have passed from him, and he might have been crucified only in effigy, and slain mystically and sacramentally; and his body might have been thus broken, and his blood shed, and yet the one have been still whole, and the other in his veins.

For these reasons, one of their own bishops in the Council of Trent denied openly, "that Christ offered up any proper sacrifice at his last supper."* But if he did not then, there was no ground for them ever to offer any in the eucharist; and therefore the Council was forced to declare he did, though no such thing appears in the Evangelical history, nor could any collect it from thence, but it was a necessary after-thought,

* Cornelius Episcopus Bitontinus, in Concilio apud Tridentum, . . . qui dixerit Christum in coena non suum corpus et sanguinem obtulisse. Canus in loc. Theol. l. 12.

and a groundless supposal, to help out and establish the sacrifice of the mass.

Secondly, There is no Scripture ground for any such sacrifice ; but it is expressly contrary to Scripture to sacrifice Christ over again, and to have any other propitiatory sacrifice besides that of the cross, and to offer up Christ's body and blood every day, which was to be but once offered, and that by himself. I have already shewn, that in the greatest foundation of this their sacrifice out of Scripture, which is Christ offering up himself at his last supper, and commanding others to offer him, there is a mistake ; and if it be so, all their other Scriptural pretences are vain and to no purpose, and must be so acknowledged by themselves ; for there is none other that does institute and appoint any such sacrifice, or can with any colour or shadow be pretended to do so ; and I hope they will own, that without a Divine institution, there cannot be a proper, and much less a propitiatory sacrifice ; and this indeed they do, they confess, " that it is not in the power of the Church to institute a sacrifice.* And that the very being and essence of the sacrifice depends upon the institution of Christ."† If that be then taken away, and there be no such thing in Scripture, as I have shewn there is not, then whatever other places they can produce to establish this, are all insignificant and to no purpose ; for if they did mention this either by way of prophecy or history, yet if it be nowhere instituted, this will not do the business, for the institution ought not to be supposed, but clearly proved and made out ; and if that cannot be, every thing else that is to support it as a collateral evidence falls to the ground. What will it signify if Melchizedek did offer bread and wine, not to Abraham only, but to God, and as a priest did sacrifice them, rather than make an hospitable entertainment with them, is this any foundation for the sacrifice of the mass ? If Christ did not institute that at his last supper with his disciples, Melchizedek, I hope, did not institute it with Abraham and his soldiers. If the prophet Malachi speaks never so much of a pure offering, yet if Christ did not offer up himself in the sacrament, nor command the Apostles to offer him up there, Malachi's prophecy will not make the eucharist to be a

* Non est in potestate Ecclesiæ instituere Sacramentum. Salmeron. tom. 9. Tract. 28.

† Tota essentia Sacrificii pendet ex Institutione Christi. Salmeron. ib. Suarez. tom. 3. Disp. 75.

sacrifice or pure offering, if Christ did not make it so : nor will the priests, I suppose, desire their power of sacrificing either from Melchizedek's act, or Malachi's prediction, without Christ's institution ; it is not only a presumption, but a demonstration that those Scriptures which they bring, do not really mean, or truly speak of any such thing as the sacrifice of the mass, when there is no such thing any where instituted or appointed by Christ, and without such an institution there cannot, as they confess, be any ground for it. All their little scattered forces therefore which they rally and pick up here and there out of Scripture, and which, against their will, they press into the service of the mass sacrifice, are hereby wholly cut off and utterly defeated, by having their main strength, without which they can do nothing of themselves, taken away from them ; and I shall examine them only to shew the weakness of them, which they being very sensible of themselves, endeavour to make up their want of strength by the greatness of their number ; and surely never were so many places brought out of Scripture to so little purpose, as what they produce for the sacrifice of the mass.

First then, they go back as far as Genesis for it, and it is very strange they should find it there ; this will make it very primitive and ancient indeed ; but wherever they meet with bread and wine, which are things of very great antiquity, they resolve to make a sacrifice of them ; especially if there be but a priest by who has the power of consecrating ; for they suppose he must presently fall to his office, and put on his habit, if bread and wine be before him ; and that he cannot, like other men, eat and drink them as his ordinary food, or entertain his friends and others with them, except he not only religiously bless them by prayer and thanksgiving, which every good man ought to do, and it was the custom even of the heathens to do this before they did eat, but he must sacrifice and offer them up to God. This they will needs have Melchizedek do in the xivth of Genesis, ver. 18, "Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine, and he was the priest of the most high God." What is there here to shew that Melchizedek offered bread and wine as a sacrifice to God ? the very word in their own vulgar Latin answering to the Hebrew, is *portulit*, "he brought forth," not *obtulit*, "he offered ;" and if it were the latter, could not he offer bread and wine to Abraham and his company upon a table, but must it necessarily be to God upon an altar ? Abraham with his three hundred and eighteen trained servants,

ver. 14, 15, had been by night pursuing those who had taken away his brother Lot captive, and when they were thus weary and hungry, Melchizedek hospitably and kindly entertained them with provision to refresh them, and brought forth bread and wine to them; thus it lies in the sacred history and context, and thus Josephus* relates it; and there is not the least mention or intimation of any sacrifice, as Cajetan† owns upon the place, and so do many of their own authors, whom Possevine‡ the Jesuit takes upon him to correct for it. Bellarmine indeed, as if he had been by at the entertainment, and been one of Abraham's soldiers, tells us, they had eaten and drank very well before, and therefore desires Melchizedek to excuse them, for they had no need of his bread and wine at that time,§ and yet in the same place owns, that these were given to Abraham and his companions for food,|| but that they were first offered to God, and then given to them to partake of them as of a sacrifice: but why were they given as food, if they had no need of food? Did Melchizedek know they had eaten? or does the Scripture say so? or might not he treat them as a king, though they had victuals of their own? how does Bellarmine know they were first sacrificed, when there is not the least word of that? Aye, but it is said that he was the priest of the most high God, therefore it is likely he sacrificed, why else should that be added? It was added because he was so, or because, as it immediately follows, ver. 19, 20, "he blessed Abraham, and Abraham gave him tithes of all his spoils;" this is more likely than because he sacrificed, for there is no mention of that as of the other; and it is not said, he brought forth bread and wine because he was the priest of the high God, it is only a conjunctive particle, *and, he was*, not a casual *for*. It is said also in the same place, "that he was king of Salem," and why might not his entertaining Abraham be as he was a king, because he is said there to be

* Ἐχορήγησε ὁ Μελχισεδέκης τῷ Ἀβράμῳ στρατῷ ξένια, καὶ πολλὴν ἀφθονίαν τῶν ἐπιτηδείων παρέσχε, l. i. c. 11. [vol. 1. p. 32. Amstel. &c. 1726.]

† Nihil hic scribitur de Sacrificio, sed de Prolatione seu Extractione, quam Josephus dicit factam ad reficiendos Victores. Cajet. in Gen. 14.

‡ Biblioth. l. 4. c. 13.

§ Quid igitur opus erat pane et vino iis qui spoliis abundabant, et paulo ante comederant et biberant? Bellarm. de Miss. l. i. c. 6. D. [vol. 3. p. 419. col. 2. Prag. 1721.]

|| At nos non negamus data illa in Cibus Abraæ et Sociis, sed dicimus fuisse prius Deo oblata et consecrata, et tum data hominibus ut de Sacrificio participarent. Ib.

a king, as well as a priest; and yet I suppose a priest may be said to treat his friends, as another man, without officiating then as a priest, though he be called a priest. Why Bellarmine should cite any Father for his opinion I cannot imagine, since the oldest of them are, I suppose, so much later, and at so great a distance from the time of Melchizedek, that they could no more know what Melchizedek did at that time, than we can now, and they are very improper witnesses of a matter of fact that was so long ago, which nothing but the Scripture-history can give us any account of; to which it is not only precarious, but rash, to add any of our guesses and conjectures: however, though some of the Fathers do by way of figure and allusion, make this bread and wine of Melchizedek to relate to the sacramental bread and wine, as they make manna, and several other things which were not sacrifices, yet none apply it to the sacrifice of the mass, nor could they well do it, since they believed no such thing in the Romish sense, as I shall shew afterwards. But after all, what if Melchizedek did sacrifice bread and wine? what service will this do to the sacrifice of the mass? The priests do not there sacrifice bread and wine according to this mystical type, nor did Melchizedek, sure, offer up Christ's body and blood under the species of his bread and wine: if we allow all that can be begged and desired, that Melchizedek did sacrifice, and that this his sacrifice was a type and figure of another sacrifice, why may that not be of the sacrifice of the cross, which is the true and only proper Christian sacrifice, when Christ, the bread of life, was offered up to God for us? So that there is no necessity to bring in the sacrifice of the mass to complete and answer this figure, were there anything in it besides guess and fancy, which I see no manner of reason to believe there is, since there is nothing to countenance it in the New Testament; and it is very presumptuous and ungrounded to make anything a true type, or to have a typical meaning, farther than God's Spirit, which alone could know this, has given us warrant to do it by revelation. Yet without any such ground, both Bellarmine,* and the Council of Trent,† make this to be the notion of Christ being a priest after the order of Melchizedek, that he was to offer up a visible and unbloody sacrifice of bread and wine, and to appoint others to do this for ever? whereas

* De Missa l. i. c. 6. [Ibid.]

† Sess. 6. [Sess. 22.] c. 1. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 952. Lut. Par. 1672.]

the Scripture makes Christ to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek, not upon any such account : for the author to the Hebrews, chap. v. ver. 7, makes not the least mention of this in his large discourse of this matter ; but in his having no predecessor nor successor in his priesthood, as Melchizedek is represented in Scripture, without any account of his family or genealogy, “without father, without mother, without descent,” Heb. vii. ver. 3, and in the excellency of that in general above the imperfect Aaronic priesthood, and in the eternity and immutability of it, “because he continueth ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood,” ver. 24. How little the Melchizedekian priesthood of Christ, upon which they lay so much stress, will serve the purpose of the mass sacrifice ; nay, how contrary it is to it, I shall endeavour to manifest in a few particulars.

First then, Christ, it is plain, did offer up to God, not an unbloody, but a bloody sacrifice upon the cross : I ask whether he did this according to his Melchizedekian priesthood ? If he did, then Melchizedek probably as priest of the high God, might offer the bloody sacrifices of living creatures ; and if he were Shem, the eldest son of Noah, as is fairly conjectured by learned men, he might learn this of his father, who after the flood “built an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar,” Gen. viii. 20. But then how will this be reconciled with what our adversaries pretend, that it was the proper and peculiar office of Melchizedek to offer the pure and unbloody sacrifice of bread and wine ? and that according to that the Roman priests are to do that, and that Christ did that at his last supper. Christ’s priesthood was the same at his supper and upon the cross ; if he acted therefore as a priest of Melchizedek in one, he did so in both.

Secondly, The Scripture mentions no act or office of Melchizedek’s priesthood but in blessing Abraham, Gen. xiv. 18, 19, “Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine, and he was the priest of the most high God, and he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, which delivered thine enemies into thine hand.” And this the author to the Hebrews, chap. vii. 1, takes particular notice of ; and this answers to what St. Peter says of Christ after his resurrection, “God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you,” Acts iii. 26. Which general word of blessing may include in it whatever it done for us by Christ’s

priesthood after his resurrection, particularly his praying and interceding to God for us. Had it been any part of Christ's Melchizedekian priesthood to offer up bread and wine, much more had it wholly consisted in this; it is strange the Apostle, in a set and large discourse of this, should not speak one word, nor take the least notice of it.

Thirdly, Christ is to have none to succeed him in his Melchizedekian priesthood, but he was himself to remain a priest for ever; the author to the Hebrews makes this difference between the Aaronical priests and Christ, that they were to succeed one another; "and they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death," Heb. vii. 23. But Christ was an immortal, and so a perpetual priest; "but this man because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood," ver. 24, ἀπαράβατον ἱερωσύνην, a priesthood that passes not to others, but is ever fixed and appropriate to his own person; "and he is made a priest, after the power of an endless life," ver. 16. That which belongs then to Christ as he is an immortal priest, and continueth ever, and hath none to succeed him, that it is which constitutes his Melchizedekian priesthood, and what that is the Apostle plainly informs us in the very next verse to those I have quoted, "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us," ver. 25. Christ's interceding with God by virtue of his sacrifice upon the cross, and appearing in heaven in the presence of God for us, and there presenting his sacrifice to his Father, and powerfully mediating on our behalf, this is his proper, unchangeable, eternal, intransitive Melchizedekian priesthood, and it is great arrogance for any to pretend to share with him, or to succeed him therefore in his proper priesthood, and to call themselves, as the Romanists do, priests after the order of Melchizedek, when none but Christ is so: this his priesthood is not committed to any upon earth, but it is to be for ever executed and discharged by himself in heaven, and he has left none to be proper priests in this sense, but only to be ministers to this great High-priest in performing some lesser, though peculiar offices proper to them, as the Levites under the Jewish dispensation had their proper work, though they were not proper priests.

The next thing they produce out of Scripture for the sacrifice of the mass, is the paschal lamb, which they will needs have to be a figure of the eucharist; and since that was a sacrifice, therefore the eucharist, which was figured by it, ought to be

so too. Now these figurative arguments, though they help to make some show, as they are dressed out by fancy, yet they have generally this fault, that they prove either too much or too little, and so either shoot over the mark, or fall a great deal short of it, but seldom hit it. The paschal lamb and the eucharist, the Christian passover, do agree in this, that they are both solemn and religious rites, commemorative of a great deliverance, and that they are both sacred and mystical feasts, wherein something is to be eaten with joy and thankfulness, and our Saviour instituted one to succeed and take place of the other; in these particulars they suit and have an agreeable analogy with one another; but figures are like circles, which may touch one another in some points, but not in all; for if we go any farther, they will necessarily divide and differ. The paschal lamb was to be eaten but once a year, the eucharist much oftener; that was a feast of visible and solid flesh, the eucharist only of bread and wine; or if there be any flesh it is invisible, and as like bread and wine as can be; however this is the flesh, according to our adversaries, of a living man, that of a dead and roasted lamb; this is not to be slain, but eaten whole and alive; the other was: and therefore why may we not add, to go no farther, this is no proper sacrifice, that probably was, for it is not past question whether it was or no, but yet such a sacrifice as was offered without a priest by every master of a family: and if the eucharist were to agree with it in this, the priests would lose a great deal of their design in making it a sacrifice; for then without hiring them, every housekeeper would offer it himself; besides, the paschal lamb was not a propitiatory sacrifice, I presume, for the quick and dead, so then in correspondence to that neither is the sacrifice of the mass, but only an eucharistic one: but after all, the paschal lamb was not truly a type and figure of the eucharist, but of Christ crucified; so says St. Paul expressly, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," 1 Cor. v. 7, and that not, I suppose, in the sacrament, but upon the cross; "the paschal figure was fulfilled," says their own Jansenius, "when our true passover Christ was immolated."* And to shew how exact a figure he then bore of the paschal lamb, "a bone of him was not to be broken," John xix. 33, as it was not likewise of that, Exod. xii. 46, and this expressly remarked, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled," John xix. 36.

* Impleta erat figura Paschatis, quando verum nostrum Pascha immolatus est Christus. Jansen. Harmon. c. 131. f. 895.

The sacrifice of the paschal lamb, and the other Jewish sacrifices wherein atonement was made for sin by shedding of blood, without which under the law there was to be no remission, were all, as the Apostle says, “shadows of good things to come,” Heb. x. 1, and types of the more perfect sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, who was the lamb slain in types and figures, as well as in design and intention, from the beginning of the world; and I cannot but think that from hence arose the universal custom of sacrificing in all religions over all the world, from an original tradition of the sacrifice of Christ, and out of a primary regard and respect to that; for I cannot imagine what else should be the reason, or give rise to expiatory sacrifices, and be the true cause of so general a practice; but that any of these sacrifices had relation to the eucharist, or were intended as figures of that, is very precarious and ungrounded: those eucharistic sacrifices indeed, in which part of what was offered was eaten by the offerers; or in holocausts, when the whole was consumed, where a peace-offering was joined with them which the sacrificers used to feast and partake of, as a token of their peace and reconciliation with God; these may fairly relate and have some respect to, at least resemblance with the eucharist, which is a kind of sacrificial feast, or sacramental feeding upon an *oblatus*, Christ’s body and blood offered for us upon the cross; but that they were types of this is more than we can be assured of, for a type is a sign or figure appointed and designed by God to signify and mark out such a thing, and we cannot know that God appoints or designs any such thing farther than we have some ground from Scripture and revelation, and therefore we must restrain typical matters within those bounds, and must not let fancy loose to make what types it pleases. There may be some similitude and likeness, by which one thing may be compared with another, without its being a type or a figure of it, as Justin Martyr, in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, calls* “the meat-offering of the fine flour which the leper was to bring for his cleansing (Levit. xiv. 10), an image or likeness

* Ἡ τῆς σεμιδάλεως προσφορά ἡ ὑπὲρ τῶν καθαριζομένων ἀπὸ τῆς λέπρας προσφέρεσθαι παραδοθεῖσα, τύπος ἦν τοῦ ἄρτου τῆς εὐχαριστίας, ὃν εἰς ἀνάμνησιν τοῦ παθούσας οὐ ἐπάθεν ὑπὲρ τῶν καθαιρομένων τὰς ψυχὰς ἀπὸ πάσης πονηρίας ἀνθρώπων Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν, παρέδωκε ποιεῖν ἵνα—καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἀπὸ κακίας ἐν ᾧ γεγόναμεν ἡλευθερωκέναι ἡμᾶς. Justin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 260. Par. [p. 137. Par. 1742.]

of the eucharistic bread which Christ our Lord appointed to be brought in remembrance of his passion, whereby our souls are cleansed from sin and wickedness, and that we may hereby give thanks to God the Creator ;” so that he makes the eucharist to answer the analogy of that meat-offering in three things in the oblation of bread, and this in commemoration of Christ’s passion, whereby we are delivered from sin, and as a thanksgiving to God, and in all these it does very well correspond with it, though that it was strictly a type of this, and so intended by God, is still to be questioned, and he that is acquainted with the Fathers, and their allegorical way of explaining Scripture, and applying all things in the Old Testament to matters in the New, will have great reason to doubt whether they did not give too much scope to their fancy in many things, and whether solid arguments may be drawn from all their allegorical discourses and applications : but yet none of them, that I know of, do make any of the ancient propitiatory sacrifices to be types and figures of the eucharist, but of the sacrifice of the cross ; however, if they should do this by some remote allusion and partial resemblance, yet not as it is a proper sacrifice or truly propitiatory, therefore not at all to the purpose of the sacrifice of the mass.

The prophecy of Malachi is one of the great Scripture proofs for this sacrifice, but it can be at most but a collateral evidence ; for if Christ did not in fact institute any such sacrifice, as I have proved he did not, this is a much better argument to shew there was none such foretold, than it can be to prove he did institute it because it was foretold : predictions are best understood by the completion of them, and if no such thing was done as is pretended from this prediction, this demonstrates that no such thing was intended or meant by it ; so that by taking away that first ground of the mass-sacrifice, I have taken away all these little under-props and supporters of it ; but let us see what seeming assistance this place of Malachi will afford them. God having reproved the Jews for their undue and unfit offerings, tells them, that better and purer offerings shall be made him every where by the Gentiles ; “ for from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering ; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts,” Malac. i. 11. Thus it is both in the Hebrew and Greek copies, as Bellarmine owns, but it is some-

thing different from both those in the vulgar Latin, where it is, "in every place is sacrificed, and is offered to my name a pure oblation."* They are so in love with the word *sacrifice*, that they chose to use that above any other, as if wherever they meet with that in Scripture, it must be meant properly, and of an external sacrifice, and of no other but the propitiatory sacrifice of the mass. Though the word here, *Mincha*, from which some of our adversaries are so foolish as to derive the Latin word *Missa*, that signifies only a dismissal of the catechumens and penitents before the office of the eucharist, does not signify a propitiatory sacrifice, but only a meat-offering which was merely eucharistic; and whereas nothing is more commonly meant by sacrifice in Scripture, than the spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and prayer, and the like, when a pious and devout soul "offers unto God thanksgiving, and pays its vows to the most high," Psalm l. 14; when the prayer of the righteous "is set forth as incense, and the lifting up of his hands as an evening sacrifice," Psalm cxli. 2. And this is the incense and pure oblation which the Fathers generally understand to be meant in that place, to wit, "glorifying and blessing God, and praise, and hymns,"† as Tertullian in so many words explains this place; and again, "a pure offering," as Malachi speaks, "is an honest prayer from a pure conscience;"‡ and so in other places§ he explains it altogether of spiritual sacrifices. Eusebius calls this pure offering of Malachi, "the incense of prayers."|| St. Jerome upon the place says, the prophet "teaches that the prayers of holy men should be offered to the Lord, not only in the single province of Judæa, to which the Jewish sacrifices were confined, but in every place."¶ There can be no sacrifice more acceptable to God, no offering with which he is so well pleased, no

* In omni loco sacrificatur et offertur nomini meo pura oblatio.

† In Ecclesiis benedicite Dominum Deum, Psalm 57, ut pariter concurreret Malachiæ prophetia, in omni loco nomini meo offertur, et sacrificium mundum, Gloriæ sc. relatio benedictio et laus et hymni, Tertul. contra Marcion. l. 3. [c. 22. p. 410. Par. 1695.]

‡ Dicente Malachia sacrificium mundum sc. simplex Oratio de Conscientia pura, ib. l. 4. [Ibid. p. 413, 414.]

§ Adversus Judæos, ib. [p. 118.]

|| Τὸ δι' εὐχῶν θυμίαμα, Euseb. Demonstrat. l. 1. c. 6. [p. 19. Colon. 1688.]

¶ Docet orationes sanctorum Domino offerendas esse non in una orbis provincia Judæa, sed in omni loco, Hieron. in Malach. 1. [vol. 6. p. 952. Veron. 1736.]

incense that is of so sweet a savour, as the prayers and praises of a devout mind, and a pure and unblemished conscience, and especially when these are kindled and inflamed to the highest degrees and ardours at the blessed sacrament, when the soul, truly sensible of the love of God, and the infinite kindness of its dying Saviour, when it has the symbol and representation of his death before it, shall pour out its grateful and hearty resentments, and thereby offer up a more pure and precious sacrifice, than "thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil." This is that incense, and that pure offering of Christians which is foretold by the prophet, and this is especially offered in the most sacred office of our religion, the blessed eucharist; and therefore some of the Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and St. Austin, apply this place to the blessed sacrament, not as any proper sacrifice is there offered, but only such divine and spiritual ones as these; and in what sense they call that a sacrifice, and we own it to be so, I shall shew afterwards.

Why should our adversaries then charge us with having no sacrifice, and therefore as they charitably tell us, no religion, when we have the best and the noblest sacrifice that can be, that "which will please the Lord much better than an ox or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs," Psalm lxix. 31, and xl. 6. Isa. i. 11. God was never pleased with those sacrifices for themselves, but he often refuses and disregards them even under the Jewish dispensation, and they were all to cease with that, and instead of such mean sacrifices and external oblations, which were to be offered then but in one place, there should in every place under Christianity be offered the more pure and spiritual sacrifices, the incense of prayer, and the pure oblation of praise and thanksgiving, and such like Christian sacrifices as are often mentioned in Scripture, and which are meant in this prophecy of Malachi, of which we shall have further occasion to speak by and by. It is a sort of Judaism then, and a returning back to that less perfect and less spiritual state, to make the religion of the Gospel consist in any visible and external sacrifice, which our adversaries so earnestly contend for, rather than in those sacrifices which are more spiritual, and therefore more truly Christian, and more agreeable to the spiritual worship, and the spiritual economy of the Gospel.

There are some other places of the Old Testament brought by Bellarmine, and other defenders of the sacrifice of the mass which are so weak and impertinent that they only serve to expose it, and therefore they are not at all mentioned in the

Council of Trent, or in the Roman Catechism ; such is that saying of the prophet to Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 35, “ that God would raise up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind, and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.” This new priest that was to succeed Eli was very probably to be a sacrificing priest, but that he was to offer the sacrifice of the mass, I leave those who bring this place for it to prove ; for without doubt this was fulfilled long before Christ, in Samuel, who succeeded Eli, and in Zadoc, who came in the room of Abiathar, who was of the family of Eli, and who was thrust out by Solomon from being priest unto the Lord, that he might fulfil the word of the Lord which he spake concerning the house of Eli, in Shiloh, 1 Kings ii. 27, as the Scripture observes, and to make this figurative or prophetic of the Christian priesthood’s succeeding the Aaronical, is great strength of fancy, but a very weak argument however for the sacrifice of the mass, unless that were the work of the Christian priesthood, which is hard to be made out.

The second is that out of the 72nd Psalm, at the 16th verse, “ There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains.” This handful of corn is by such Rabbinical men as Galatinus, made into a cake or *placenta*, and that must needs be the wafer-cake, which being upon the top of the mountains, must be heaved and elevated over the head of the priests. This is such an argument for the sacrifice of the mass as were sufficient to convert the Vicar of Putney, who by the help of Galatinus can prove transubstantiation out of the Rabbis, and had the good fortune to be brought into the true Church, not by Father P. or Father G. but by Rabbi Solomon, and those two other ancient Rabbis of his, Midras and Coheleth, which writ such a commentary upon Ecclesiastes, that they are the very commentary itself. “ It is strange,” as he says,* “ that the Hebrew writers should long before Christ’s time have such notions ;” but it is more strange that some people since Christ’s time should have no better arguments for the great principles of their religion ; “ but the wind,” as he goes on, “ bloweth where it listeth,” and some men have such a wind-mill in their crowns, that anything will turn it. Whatever feasts of sweetmeats and dainties the Jews expected as foretold by this Psalm in the days of the Messiah, and were willing

* Preface to Consensus Veterum.

to mean by the handful of corn on the top of the mountains, they never dreamt of the sacrifice of the mass.

The next is that of the Proverbs, chap. ix. ver. 2: "Wisdom hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table;" but I am sure she never made this argument for the sacrifice of the mass: I will improve this place, if they please, for the proof of other things, as of priests' celibacy, because in the next words it is said, "Wisdom hath sent forth her maidens," ver. 3. Of the Church of Rome's being the house that was built by Wisdom, because it is said in the first verse, "She hath hewn out her seven pillars," which are as undoubtedly the seven hills of Rome, as this allegorical banquet is the sacrifice of the mass. Our adversaries sure could not be very serious and in good earnest, when they produced such places as these, and therefore they must excuse us for not being so in answering them.

I shall mention but one more, which if it be not as ridiculous, yet it is as impertinent as the other, and that is out of Daniel, chap. viii. 11, where it is said "the daily sacrifice was taken away," by a great prince that is there prophetically described. It is plain that by the daily sacrifice there is meant that of the Jews; and by the prince who should take it away, Antiochus, who did literally perform this by destroying the Jewish worship, and horribly profaning the temple; if by him was allegorically and prophetically meant the Christian antichrist, if I may so speak, spoken of by St. Paul, 2 Thess. ii. and by St. John, Rev. xiii. described as a beast having seven heads and ten horns, as Bellarmine will have it,* then whether this mark belongs not to him that sets up the sacrifice of the mass, and destroys, as far as he has power, and takes away all the purer worship of Christ, and has a great many other characters upon him that look very suspicious, will be a great question, for which I dare say there are a great many more probabilities than that by the daily sacrifice here is meant the sacrifice of the mass.

I come now to the New Testament, where if there be any proofs for the sacrifice of the mass, it is more likely to find them than in the Old; yet they produce twice as many more, such as they are, out of that than this, and like some other people, are more beholden to dark types and obscure prophecies of the Old Testament to make out their principles, than to

* Chap. 9. de Miss. l. 1. [Ut supra p. 430. col. 2.]

the clear light of the Gospel, and to any plain places in the New ; and yet if any such doctrine as this were to be received by Christians, and if any such wonderful and essential part of worship were appointed by Christ, or taught and practised by the Apostles, we should surely have it more plainly set down in the New Testament than they are able to shew it.

The first place they urge from thence belongs no more to the sacrifice of the mass, than the first commandment does in the Decalogue ; and they had as good have quoted our Saviour's words to the devil, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God," and so have proved from thence, that God ought to be worshipped by the sacrifice of the mass, as those to the woman of Samaria, which Bellarmine* brings to this purpose out of John iv. 21, 23 : "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father ; for the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." From whence he infers that they must worship him by sacrifice, and this must be the sacrifice of the mass, and that this is to worship him in spirit and in truth. If this be not all evidence and demonstration, there is none in Euclid ; and if we may not here cry out *εὕρηκα*, the mass is found, we are blind and obstinate ; but I see very little more for it here than from the other places I named, but rather something against it ; for to worship God in spirit and truth, and that because he is a Spirit, as our Saviour there adds, ver. 24, is not to worship him by an external, visible, typical sacrifice as the mass is, and as those of the Jews were, but by a more pure and spiritual worship of praise and thanksgiving, and prayer, such as that of Christians is to be, as more suitable to the spiritual nature of God ; and these spiritual sacrifices of Christians are not to be tied to one place, as those more gross and carnal ones of the Jews were, which was the thing our Saviour here designed. The greatest part of the public Jewish worship was fixed to the temple, and to Jerusalem ; their tithes and first-fruits, and firstlings, and festivals, as well as their sacrifices, and there may be divine worship without sacrifice as well as with it, and whatever the worship be which our Saviour here says was to be spiritual, it was not like the Jewish, to be fixed to one place, which is the true scope of those words to the Samaritan woman, in answer to her ques-

* De Missa, l. 1. c. 11. [Ibid. p. 435. col. 2.]

tion, ver. 20, whether Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem was the true place of worship, which was the great dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans; our Saviour determines for neither, but puts an end to the question, and says, that now under the Gospel the worship of God was not local, and as to the manner of it, that it was spiritual.

The second and principal argument for the sacrifice of the mass is from Christ's institution and first celebration of the eucharist with his disciples: and here indeed is the true place to find it, if there be any such thing; but I have already shewn * that Christ did then neither sacrifice himself, nor command his disciples to do so, and have taken away that which is the very foundation of the mass-sacrifice, and without which every thing else that can be said for it falls to the ground.

There are but two other, and those very weak ones behind; the one is out of the thirteenth of the Acts, where it is said of Saul and Barnabas, and the prophets, and teachers of the Church at Antioch, that "they ministered unto the Lord;" but could not they minister and perform the divine office and service without sacrificing? It must be first proved that that was part of the religious office, before it can appear that it was meant here; it is said they fasted and prayed, and in that probably their *Λειτουργία*, or ministry consisted; or as St. Chrysostom,† and after him Œcumenius explains it, in preaching; but that they sacrificed there is not the least evidence. The word *Λειτουργεῖν* doth not signify to sacrifice, but to perform any proper function, and therefore it is attributed in the Scripture both to the angels who are called ministering spirits,‡ and to the magistrates, who are called the ministers of God:§ and yet sacrificing, I suppose, belongs to neither of them, nor does their own vulgar Latin so translate it here.

The last is out of the 1 Cor. x. for Bellarmine gives up that out of the Hebrews xiii. "We have an altar of which they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle," though it is as much to his purpose, in my mind, as any of the rest; "but some catholic writers," he says, "do by altar mean there,

* P. 8, 9, 10.

† Homil. 37. in Act. [vol. 9. p. 216. par. 1731.]

‡ *Λειτουργικά πνεύματα*, Heb. i. 14.

§ *Λειτουργοὶ Θεοῦ*, Rom. xiii. 6.

either the cross or Christ himself;”* but if it were meant of the eucharist, that is but an altar in an improper sense, as the sacrifice offered on it is but improper and metaphorical, as we shall prove; but in the place to the Corinthians, the Apostle commands them not to eat of things offered to idols, for to eat of them was to partake of things sacrificed to devils, and so to have communion with devils, which was very unfit for those who were partakers of the Lord’s table, and therein truly communicated of the body and blood of Christ, as those who did eat of the Jewish sacrifices were partakers of the Jewish altar. Now what is here of the sacrifice of the mass, or any way serviceable to it? Why, yes, the Apostle compares the table of the Lord with the table of devils, and eating of the Lord’s supper with eating the Jewish and the heathen sacrifices, therefore the Christians ought to have an altar as well as the Jews, and what they fed on, ought to be sacrificed as well as the heathen *Εἰδωλόθυστα*; but the Apostle says nothing of this, nor makes any such comparison between them, but only shews the unfitness of Christians eating of the heathen sacrifices who partook of the Lord’s table; he does not call the Lord’s table an altar, nor the eucharist a sacrifice, nor was there any danger that the Christians should go to eat in the idol temples, but he would not have them eat of their sacrifices brought home, and the whole comparison lies here, the eating of the Lord’s Supper did make them true partakers of the Lord’s body and blood sacrificed upon the cross; as eating of the Jewish sacrifices did make the Jews partakers of the Jewish altar; and as eating of things offered to idols was having fellowship with devils, so that they who partook of such holy food as Christians did, should not communicate of such execrable and diabolical food as the heathen *Εἰδωλόθυστα*. If indeed Christians could not partake of Christ’s body and blood in the eucharist, unless they first made a proper sacrifice and oblation of them, then the Apostle’s discourse would necessarily suppose and imply them to be thus offered, as the Jewish and heathen sacrifices were before they were eaten; but since Christ’s body and blood being once offered upon the cross, is a sufficient sacrifice and oblation of them, and the

* Quia non desunt ex Catholicis, qui eo loco per altare intelligunt cruem aut ipsum Christum, non urgeo istum locum. Bellarm. de Miss. c. 14. [Ibid. p. 439. col. 2.]

eucharist is a religious and sacramental feast upon the sacrifice of Christ once offered, this is sufficient for the Apostle's scope and design in that place, where there is no other comparison made between the table of the Lord and the table of devils, but that one makes us to be partakers of the body and blood of Christ, and the other to have fellowship with devils; and as to the Jewish altar, the antithesis does not lie here, as Bellarmine would have it, between that and the table of the Lord, that both have proper sacrifices offered upon them, which are eaten after they are sacrificed; but the cross of Christ rather is the antithesis to the Jewish altar, on which sacrifices were really and properly slain, which are not on the Christian altar; and the feeding and partaking of those sacrifices so offered, whereby they were made partakers of the altar, this answers to the sacramental feeding upon Christ's body and blood in the Christian altar, whereby we are made partakers of the cross of Christ, and have the virtue and merit of his sacrifice communicated to us.

Thus I have considered and fully answered whatever our adversaries can bring out of Scripture for their sacrifice of the mass. I shall now offer some places of Scripture that are directly contrary to it, and do perfectly overthrow it; and though their cause must necessarily sink if the Scriptures be not for it (because without a Scriptural foundation there can be no Divine institution of a sacrifice, which is necessary, by their own confession; and so essential a part of worship ought surely to be appointed by no less authority than of God himself, so that if it be destitute of Scripture grounds, it must, like a castle in the air, fall of itself, and can have nothing else to support it), yet I shall shew that Scripture is plainly against it, and that so strong a battery may be raised and levelled at it from thence, that none of their arts or devices can be able to withstand it. It is from those known places of the Epistle to the Hebrews, from whence I have already shewn how contrary their doctrine is to our Saviour's Melchizedekian priesthood; I shall now urge those places out of that Epistle, wherein the divine author of it, who was probably St. Paul, largely and designedly sheweth the excellency of Christ's sacrifice above those under the law upon this account, that it had so much virtue and efficacy in it, that by one offering it obtained full and perfect remission of sin; whereas this was the great imperfection of the others, and shewed their great weakness and insufficiency, that they were

so often offered, and so frequently repeated : “ Every priest of the Jews standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sin,” chap. x. 11. And it was plain they could not take away sin, because they were so often offered over again, either every day or every year ; “ for the law can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect,” chap. x. 1, “ for then would they not have ceased to be offered ; because that the worshippers once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year,” ver. 2, 3. Those sacrifices being but like the acknowledgments of a debtor, that he owed a great sum, which he had no way fully to pay off and discharge ; but he raised and brought what he could, and so owned the debt, and that he had not wherewithal to take it quite off, nor to make that solution and satisfaction which was necessary. But such was the value of the sacrifice of Christ, that it was a perfect price and payment, and made full satisfaction at once ; so that “ by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,” chap. x. 14 ; and made such full atonement and expiation by that, that there is no more need, nor “ remains no more sacrifice for sins ; but this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God,” ver. 12, as having fully done the work of a priest upon earth, and having no need to offer any further sacrifice, “ nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others,” chap. ix. 25, “ (For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world) but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,” ver. 26 ; and “ Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many,” ver. 28 ; and “ we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,” chap. x. 10. So that Christ our High Priest “ needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people : for this he did once when he offered up himself,” chap. vii. 27. Nothing can be said plainer against the sacrifice of the mass, wherein Christ is often offered, and that as properly and truly, they pretend, as the Jewish sacrifices were, or as he was upon the cross, when it is here so much insisted upon that Christ’s sacrifice was but once offered, whereas those under the law were often ; and this made an argument of their

weakness and imperfection, and of the full virtue and value of the other : must it not appear very strange after this that it should be made the great part of some men's religion to repeat the same sacrifice every day, and to offer him up again every day upon the altar, as truly as the Jews offered their sacrifices day by day continually, and as he once offered up himself upon the cross, and to make this daily sacrifice of him in the mass have as true a virtue to propitiate God and expiate sin as the other had, and to be every way as true and proper a sacrifice as the other. I need not labour much to shew how contrary this is to this discourse of the author to the Hebrews, and to the true scope and design of it ; it appears so evidently to be so, that our adversaries are put to the greatest straits and difficulties imaginable to make themselves think otherwise, and to reconcile what the Apostle here says of the sacrifice of Christ with what their Church says of the sacrifice of the mass ; and that they are perfectly inconsistent, notwithstanding all their pretences and evasions, I shall make appear by what follows.

First, then, they tell us, that their sacrifice of the mass is but the very same with the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, and so it does not at all take off from the virtue of that, or suppose that to be imperfect, since this is no other, nor no new sacrifice, but only the same both in nature and virtue with that. If it were another sacrifice, indeed, or were supposed to have a distinct virtue and efficacy from that of the cross, it might reflect upon that, and be injurious to it ; but since they declare it to be the same, they do not conceive how it is any way so. But the Apostle's discourse (for it is probable an Apostle was author of this Epistle) in the fore-mentioned places, is about repeating the same sacrifices, and offering them up year by year continually ; and from hence he grounds the imperfection of them, and that they could not make the comers thereunto perfect, chap. x. 1. These sacrifices, indeed, were many, and of several sorts, which they offered ; but they still offered them up again and again, both daily and yearly, and it was their often offering of them, as well as their multitude, which the Apostle reflects upon, their " daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice," chap. x. 11 : whereas Christ, by one sacrifice, and that once offered, chap. ix. 28, did fully put away sin. So that had the same sacrifice of Christ been often offered, as the same sacrifices of the Jews were, it had upon that account been liable to the same charge

of imperfection ; for if “by one offering it had for ever perfected them that are sanctified,” and had obtained perfect and plenary remission of sins, and had done the whole work, and had the whole effect of all that sacrifices were intended for, then what need it be any further offered ? The offering up the same sacrifice, and continuing daily to offer it, shews that it was not sufficient, nor did do the business at once offering, as the frequent using the same medicine shews that it has not fully cured the wound, nor yet perfectly done its work.

Secondly, The sacrifice of the mass, they say, is only to apply the virtue and merit of the sacrifice of the cross ; for though the sacrifice of the cross, like a powerful medicament, have sufficient virtue in it, yet what does that signify unless it be applied to us, which it is by the sacrifice of the mass ? But is there not another way to apply that to us ? Is it not applied to us by faith, and by the common means of Christ’s own institution, the Christian sacraments, and especially by the worthy receiving of the Lord’s supper, wherein, as the Apostle says, “the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? and the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ?” 1 Cor. x. 16. We do hereby communicate and are made partakers of Christ’s body as it was sacrificed for us ; that is, of all the virtues and benefits of his sacrifice, by being ; as the Apostle adds, ver. 17, “made partakers of that one bread ;” that is, surely, by eating it sacramentally and religiously, as Christ has appointed ; for it would sound very hard, and be a very odd expression, to say we are partakers of that one bread by the sacrificing or offering up of that bread, when they will not own that the bread is sacrificed ; or if it were, could we well be thereby partakers of it ; but it is the eating of that bread which makes us partakers of it ; and it is the eating Christ’s body, and drinking his blood in the blessed sacrament, that communicates and applies the virtue of his sacrifice of the cross to us, and not the sacrificing of that again, as the Apostle goes on, ver. 18 : “Are not they who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar ?” It is eating and communicating that makes us partakers of Christ’s sacrifice. We do then eat of the sacrifice, and so partake of it, as the Jews did of their sacrifices ; the communion is a feasting upon a true *oblatum*, the body and blood of Christ, as is excellently made out by a learned man of our own ; we do not there sacrifice Christ’s body, but only sacramentally eat of it, as being already sacrificed and offered once for all by Christ himself upon the

cross. It is not at all necessary that it should be sacrificed again by us to make us become partakers of it; for cannot a sacrifice be applied without being sacrificed again? It seems a very strange and uncouth way to sacrifice the same thing over and over, in order to applying the virtue of it, as if the Jews, when they had slain the paschal lamb, must have slain another lamb in order to the partaking the virtue of it. No, they were to eat of it for that purpose, and so are we of Christ's sacrifice; and this is the way whereby we do communicate of it, and have its full virtue applied to us. It was the weakness and insufficiency of their sacrifices that made them so often repeat them and sacrifice them anew; but Christ's sacrifice being perfect, is to be but once offered, though it be often to be eaten and partaken of by us, which it may be without being again sacrificed.

Thirdly, The author of this Epistle makes not the least mention of Christ's sacrifice being offered again upon earth, or of its being repeated in the sacrifice of the mass; but after he himself had once offered it upon the cross, he immediately speaks of his presenting it to God in heaven, and there by virtue of it interceding and mediating with him for us, "that by his own blood he entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," Heb. ix. 12, as the Jewish high priest on the great day of expiation, after he had offered the sacrifice of atonement for the whole congregation upon the altar, carried the blood of it into the holy of holies, and there sprinkled it before the mercy-seat, Levit. xvi. 15. This great anniversary sacrifice for the whole congregation, was the great type and figure of Christ's sacrifice for all mankind, and the holy of holies was the type of heaven, and the high priest, of Christ, as is confessed by all: Christ therefore, our High Priest, to whom alone it belongeth to offer this sacrifice of atonement and expiation for the whole world, having done this upon the cross, "he entered not into places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," chap. ix. 24, to appear there as our Advocate and Mediator, and by virtue of his own blood there presented to his Father, to make a very powerful intercession for us. Now from this discourse of the Apostle, we have a full account of Christ's sacrifice, that it was to be once offered upon the cross, and then to be carried into the holy of holies in heaven, and no more to be offered upon earth, "for this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins,

for ever sat down on the right of God," chap. x. 12. The Apostle speaks not one tittle, nor gives the least hint or intimation of this sacrifice being offered again by others upon earth; this lies cross to the whole tenor of his discourse, and the similitude and agreement which he represents between the Jewish sacrifice of atonement and Christ's, is quite altered and destroyed by it; for besides the high priest's offering this sacrifice, this makes every lesser priest to be still offering the same sacrifice upon the altar, when the high priest is entered with the blood of it into the holy of holies; and though he cannot go in there, upon which the virtue and the perfection of the sacrifice does in great measure depend, yet still to offer the same sacrifice; and besides, it makes this sacrifice too like the Jewish, "where every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices," which, for the reason shewed, "could never take away sins," chap. x. 11; in opposition to which he says, "this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God," ver. 12. that is, Christ's sacrifice was never to be repeated as the Jewish were; for if it had been to be offered by others, though not by Christ himself, and the Christian priests were to stand daily ministering and offering the same sacrifice, both they and their sacrifice would have been the same upon this account with the Jewish, and there had not been that difference between them, which the Apostle does there plainly mean and declare.

Further, it cannot but seem very strange, that when this divine author does so largely and copiously, and designedly treat of the sacrifice of Christ, and of those of the Jews, and compare them so much together, and shew the excellency of the one above the other, that he should never say the least word of the sacrifice of the mass, when he had so much occasion to do it, that it can hardly be imagined he should have so wholly omitted it, had it been, as others since account it, as true and proper a sacrifice as any of the Jewish, or of Christ's himself upon the cross.

Fourthly, The Apostle here plainly lays down a principle directly contrary, and wholly inconsistent with their doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, and that is, that if Christ be offered he must suffer, and that without shedding of blood, there is no remission. "Nor yet," saith he at the 25th and 26th verses, and ixth chapter, "that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of

others : for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world ; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." For then must he often have suffered, if he had been often offered ; without suffering then Christ cannot be offered and sacrificed ; and indeed to sacrifice any thing, is to consume and destroy it, so that it be wholly parted with and given up to God ; and to sacrifice any thing that is living, is to take away its life and to kill it, and so to make it suffer death, as a vicarious punishment in another's stead ; this is the common and allowed notion of sacrifices, but Christ cannot suffer in the mass, therefore he cannot be truly offered or sacrificed, since according to the Apostle, if he be often offered, he must often suffer ; and they would not, I hope, crucify to themselves the Lord of life again, put him to death upon the altar, as the Jews did upon the cross ; and yet without this they cannot truly sacrifice him, or properly offer him, according to the Apostle. But this, says their great champion the bishop of Meaux, is done mystically : "Christ is mystically slain, and doth mystically suffer death upon the altar," that is, by way of representation and resemblance, and the mysterious signification of what is done there, as St. Paul says to the Galatians, chap. iii. ver. 1 : "Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you." Now so Christ may be crucified every time we hear or read his crucifixion lively represented to us, as we may see a bloody tragedy without one drop of blood spilt ; so Christ may be mystically slain in the sacrament, when his body is broke, and his blood poured out in mystery and representation ; but this is not a true and proper offering which is necessary to make a true and proper sacrifice, as they will have that of the mass to be ; if they would be contented with a mystical sacrifice to represent and commemorate Christ's death, that they know we are willing to allow ; and then a mystical suffering that is not a real and proper, would be sufficient for a mystical, that is, not proper sacrifice, but the suffering must be as true and proper as the sacrifice ; and if the one be but mystical, the other must be so too ; if the bullock or goat of the sin-offering which was to be offered on the great day of atonement, had been only mystically slain, and mystically offered upon the altar, they had been as really alive for all that, as any that were in the fields, and had been no more true and proper sacrifices of atonement and expiation than *they* were, "for without shedding of blood," as the Apostle says, "there is no

remission," Heb. ix. 22. It was the shedding or pouring out the blood, in which the life was supposed to be, and therefore the taking away the life of the sacrifice that did really make the sacrifice to be truly propitiatory or available before God as a price and recompence for the remission of sins. And how then can the sacrifice of the mass be truly propitiatory, when the blood is not truly shed? When, according to themselves, it is *incrumentum sacrificium*, an unbloody sacrifice, and therefore, according to the Apostle, it cannot be propitiatory for the remission of sins, as will be further insisted upon afterwards. Thus we see how much there is in those clear places of Scripture against the sacrifice of the mass, and how little there is for it in those dark ones which are produced by our adversaries.

Thirdly, It has no just claim to antiquity, nor was there any such doctrine or practice in the Primitive Church; this is greatly boasted and vaunted of, and although their cause runs very low in Scripture, yet they pretend it carries all antiquity before it, where nothing is more common than to have the name of oblation, and sacrifice, and host, and victim, attributed to the blessed eucharist, and to have it said that we do there offer, and immolate, and sacrifice unto God; this we readily acknowledge, and though we can by no means allow antiquity to take place of Scripture, or to set up either an article of faith, or essential part of worship which is not in Scripture, and our adversaries seem to agree with us in this, that there must be a Divine institution for a sacrifice, or else it can have no true foundation; so that if Scripture fails them, it is in vain to fly for refuge to antiquity; yet we doubt not but that Scripture and antiquity will be fairly reconciled, and be made very good friends in this point; and both of them against the sacrifice of the mass, as it is taught and practised in the Church of Rome.

The name of sacrifice and oblation is often given both in Scripture and antiquity, in an improper, general, and metaphorical sense; thus it is applied to the inward actions of the mind, to penitence and sorrow for sin: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," Psal. li. 17. To the outward thanksgivings of the mouth, "when we render unto God the calves of our lips," Hosea xiv. 2. "When we offer unto him thanksgiving," Psal. l. 14. Or, as the Apostle more fully expresses it, when he commands Christians "to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name," Heb. xiii. 15; where the metaphor is carried on

in several words ; and in the very next verse it is applied to works of mercy and charity, and beneficence to others, “but to do good and to communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased,” ver. 16. And St. Paul, in another place, calls the Philippians’ charity, “an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God,” Phil. iv. 18. Nay, he calls preaching the Gospel, a *Λειτουργία* and *Ἱερουργία*, which our adversaries earnestly contend to mean nothing less than a sacrifice ; and the converting the Gentiles he calls a *προσφορά*, “an offering acceptable to God,” Rom. xv. 16.* And in another place he calls the faith of the Christians a sacrifice, Phil. ii. 17.† And his own martyrdom, an oblation, ib. 1 Tim. iv. 6. St. Peter not only calls works of piety, “spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ,” but he ascribes a holy priesthood to all Christians to offer these up, 1 Pet. ii. 5. And upon that account St. John also gives them the title of priests, Rev. i. 6. Now as the Holy Spirit of God often chooses to use this phrase and metaphor, which is very easy and natural, so from hence, and in accommodation probably both to the Jews and heathens, the greatest part of whose religion was sacrifices. The ancient writers do also very frequently make use of it, and apply it both to actions of morality, and to all parts of religious worship, but especially to the blessed eucharist, which is the most sacred and solemn of all other ; but they do not do this in the strict and proper sense of the word sacrifice, as is plain from the foregoing instances, but in a large, and general, and metaphorical one ; so that though our adversaries could muster up ten times as many places out of the Fathers, wherein the eucharist is called a sacrifice and oblation, and in the celebrating of which we are said to offer and immolate to God, with which they are apt to make a great show, and to triumph as if the victory were perfectly gained against us, yet they are all to no purpose, and would do no real execution upon us, unless they can prove that these are to be taken in a strict and proper sense, which it is necessary they should be to make a proper sacrifice, and not in

* Εἰς τὸ εἶναί με λειτουργὸν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἱερουργοῦντα τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἵνα γένηται ἡ προσφορά τῶν ἐθνῶν εὐπρόσδεκτος ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.

† Ἀλλ’ εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν.

a large and metaphorical one, as we are willing to allow, and in which the Scriptures, we see, do understand them, and so do the Fathers, as I shall evidently demonstrate. Upon what accounts, and in what sense the Fathers do call the eucharist a sacrifice and oblation, and apply the phrases of immolating and offering, and the like, to it, I shall now particularly consider. And,

1. They do this, upon the account of those oblations of bread and wine, and other things which it was the custom for Christians to bring when they came to the communion, out of which a part was consecrated for the eucharist, and the remainder was for a common feast of love and a religious entertainment, or for the maintenance of the clergy and the poor, to whom they were afterwards distributed. This custom the Apostle takes notice of, 1 Cor. xi. and the ancient writers expressly mention it in several places, after the *Ἀγάπαι*, or feasts of love, were for some abuses laid aside. Clemens Romanus, in his first epistle, the most ancient and most unquestioned piece of antiquity we have, speaks expressly of these *Προσφορὰς*, oblations, and joins them with the sacred and religious offices,* and commends “those who make these their oblations orderly, and at the appointed times.”† The Apostolic Canons that go under his name, though their credit is not so authentic, speak very particularly of these offerings, and of their being “brought to the altar for a sacrifice.”‡ Ignatius speaks also of “offering and of bringing the sacrifice.”§ Justin Martyr mentions “these offerings as accompanied with prayer and thanksgiving, and as the way by which Christians worshipped the Creator, instead of the bloody sacrifices, and libations, and incense that were offered by

* Κατὰ καιροὺς τεταγμένους τὰς τε προσφορὰς καὶ Λειτουργίας ἐπιτελεῖσθαι (ἐκέλευσεν ὁ δεσπότης). Clemens Ep. 1. ad Corinth. p. 85. Edit. Oxon. [p. 85. Tubing. 1842.]

† Οἱ οὖν τοῖς προστεταγμένοις καιροῖς ποιῶντες τὰς προσφορὰς αὐτῶν, εὐπρόσδεκτοί τε καὶ μακάριοι, ib. p. 86. [Ibid.]

‡ Εἴ τις Ἐπίσκοπος ἢ Πρεσβύτερος παρὰ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου διάταξιν ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ προσενέγκῃ ἕτερά τινα ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον, ἢ μέλι ἢ γάλα ἢ ἀντὶ οἴνου σίκερα, &c. Canon 3. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 1. p. 25. Lut. Par. 1671.]

§ Οὔτε βαπτίζειν οὔτε προσφέρειν οὔτε θυσίαν προσκομίζειν, sc. absque Episcopo. Epist. ad Smyrn. [Epist. Interpol. ad Smyrn. p. 150. Lips. 1629.]

others;* and these," says he, "we account the proper way of honouring him, not by consuming his gifts in the fire, but by thus offering them for the poor, and for ourselves." Irenæus says, "The Church offers to God, who affords us food, the first-fruits of his gifts, and the first-fruits of his creatures, not as if he wanted, but that we may be grateful."† And though Fevardentius, in his notes upon this and the other places of Irenæus, wherein he speaks of this oblation, would have it meant of the oblation of Christ himself in the eucharist, yet that is clearly disproved by his so often calling it "the offering to God of his own creatures," and "the first-fruits of his creatures,"‡ which must be no other than of bread and wine, and the like; and from hence he proves against the Marcionites, that Christ was§ the Son of the Creator and Maker of the world, because that his creatures were offered in the eucharist. St. Cyprian condemning and blaming some of the rich women who came to the sacrament without bringing these oblations, "Thou comest," says he, "into the Lord's house without a sacrifice, and takest part of that sacrifice which the poor hath offered."|| St. Austin insists upon the same thing, and bids them "offer the oblations which are consecrated upon the altar; a man who is able ought to blush if he eat of another's oblation¶ without offering himself." These oblations are expressly called a sacrifice in the Apostolic Canons, in Ignatius and in St. Cyprian, as alms and works of charity are in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. xiii. ver. 16, and these, in our Church's prayer before the sacrament, we beg God to accept

* Τὸν δημιουργὸν τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς σεβόμενοι ἀνευδεῖν αἱμάτων καὶ σπονδῶν καὶ θυμιαμάτων,—λόγῳ εὐχῆς καὶ εὐχαριστίας ἐφ' οἷς προσφερόμεθα πᾶσιν.—μόνην ἀξίαν αὐτοῦ τιμὴν ταύτην παραλαβόντες οὐ πυρὶ δαπανᾶν ἀλλ' ἑαυτοῖς καὶ τοῖς δεομένοις προσφέρειν.—Justin. Martyr. Apolog. 2. [Apol. 1. n. 13.] [p. 50. Par. 1742.]

† Ecclesia — offert Deo, ei qui nobis alimenta præstat, primitias suorum munerum, — primitias Deo offerre ex suis creaturis; non quasi indigenti, sed ut ipsi nec infructuosi, nec ingrati sint. Iren. advers. Hæres. l. 4. c. 32. [c. 17. p. 249. col. 2. Venet. 1734.]

‡ Primitias earum quæ sunt ejus creaturarum offerentes, — offerens ei ex gratiarum actione ex creatura ejus. Ib. c. 34. [Ibid. p. 251. col. 1.]

§ Quomodo autem constabit eum panem in quo gratiæ actæ sunt — si non ipsum fabricatoris mundi filium dicant. Ib.

|| In Dominicum sine sacrificio venis, quæ partem de sacrificio, quod pauper obtulit, sumis. Cypr. de Oper. et Eleemos. [p. 482. Venet. 1728.]

¶ Oblationes quæ in altari consecrantur offerte, erubescere debet homo idoneus, si de aliena oblatione communicet. Aug. Serm. 13. de Temp.

of. In the Apostolic Constitutions, where we have the largest, if not earliest account of the eucharistic office, the oblation is thus described: "We offer to thee, King and God, according to thy appointment, this bread and this cup, and we beseech thee to look graciously upon these gifts set before thee, O thou God who wantest nothing, and send thy Holy Spirit upon this sacrifice,"* *i. e.* upon these oblations, "and make them to be the body and blood of Christ," *i. e.* sacramentally and virtually. In the *Ordo Romanus*, and in the Canon of the Mass itself,† there is this prayer over the oblations, "That God would accept and bless these gifts, these presents, these holy and undefiled sacrifices which we offer to thee," &c. And another to the same purpose said by their priest with his hands stretched over the *oblata*: "This oblation therefore of our service and of thy whole family, we beseech thee, O Lord, mercifully to receive," &c. And again, "This oblation, O Lord, we beseech thee to make blessed," &c. signing upon the *oblata*, "that it may be to us the body and blood of thy dearest Son our Lord Jesus Christ." All these prayers over the oblations, whereby they are presented to God, are made before consecration, so that the oblations which are here called holy and pure sacrifices, are thought worthy of that name before they are become the body and blood of Christ, and so made a proper sacrifice in the present sense of the Church of Rome. The Canon of the Mass is older than their new doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, and affords plain evidence for applying the name of sacrifice to the eucharist, upon the account of those offerings and oblations that were made there.

2. The eucharist is called a sacrifice by the ancients, upon

* Προσφέρομέν σοι τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ Θεῷ κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ διάταξιν τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον καὶ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο—καὶ ἀξιούμέν σε ὅπως εὐμενῶς ἐπιβλέψῃς ἐπὶ τὰ προκείμενα δῶρα ταῦτα ἐνώπιόν σου ὁ ἀνενδεής Θεός—καὶ καταπέμψῃς τὸ ἅγιόν σε πνεῦμα ἐπὶ τὴν θυσίαν ταύτην—"Ὅπως ἀποφύγῃ τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Apostol. Constit. l. 8. c. 12. [Ibid. p. 482.]

† Te igitur clementissime Pater per Jesum Christum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum supplices rogamus ac petimus, ut accepta habeas et benedicas hæc dona, hæc munera, hæc sancta sacrificia, illibata in primis quæ tibi offerimus, — Hanc igitur oblationem servitutis nostræ, sed et cunctæ familiæ tuæ, quæsumus Domine ut placatus accipias, — Quam oblationem tu Deus in omnibus quæsumus benedictam, ascriptam, ratam, rationabilem, acceptabilemque facere digneris: ut nobis corpus et sanguis fiat dilectissimi filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi. *Ordo Romanus*, p. 62. Edit. Hittorp. Canon. Miss. [Par. 1610.]

the account of those religious acts and pious exercises which are there performed by the devout communicants, and which are called sacrifices both in Scripture and in the Fathers; thus our prayers may be as well a morning as an "evening sacrifice," Psal. cxli. 2. And therefore, as Irenæus says, speaking of the eucharist, "God would have us continually offer a gift at his altar, to wit, our prayers and oblations, which are directed to the heavenly altar,"* though they are made at the earthly. So our praises and thanksgivings, which are then raised to the highest pitch, when we have the greatest instance of the Divine love offered to our minds, are that sacrifice which we are then to offer to God, "giving thanks to his name," Heb. xiii. 15. Namely, for that miracle of kindness Christ dying for us, from which the eucharist has its name, and for which reason it is called "a sacrifice of praise" in the Ordo Romanus,† viz. "for our redemption and hope of salvation," and also "for those vows which we then render unto God, when we present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God," Rom. xii. 1, as the Apostle speaks, and as St. Austin expresses it, "the Church is then offered to God, and is made one body in Christ, when we are made to drink into one spirit," 1 Cor. xii. 13, and this is the sacrifice of Christians,‡ not only a sacrifice of praise, as it is called by Eusebius,§ St. Basil,|| St. Austin¶ and other Fathers, whereby we offer up unto God the calves of our lips, in the Scripture phrase, "but wherein we offer and present unto God ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice unto him, and though we are unworthy to offer unto him any sacrifice, yet we beseech him to accept this our bounden duty and service," according to the prayer of our Church in its excellent

* Vult nos quoque sine intermissione offerre munus ad altare: est ergo altare in cœlis, illuc enim preces et oblationes nostræ diriguntur. Iren. l. 4. advers. Hæres. c. 33. [ut supra, p. 251. col. 2. 252. col. 1.]

† Memento Domine famulorum famularumque tuarum, et omnium circumadstantium, quorum tibi fides cognita est, et nota devotio, qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis pro se suisque omnibus pro redemptione animarum suarum, pro spe salutis, &c. — tibi que reddunt vota sua. Ordo Romanus, [Ibid.] p. 62.

‡ Hoc est Sacrificium Christianorum: multi unum corpus sumus in Christo, quod etiam sacramento altaris fidelibus noto frequentat Ecclesia, ubi ei demonstratur, quod in ea oblatione quam offert, ipsa offeratur. August. de Civitate Dei, l. 10. c. 6. [Ibid. vol. 7. p. 243.]

§ Demonstrat. l. 1. c. 10. [ut supra, p. 40.]

|| Liturg. [vol. 2. p. 975. Par. 1839.]

¶ Ad Pet. Diac. c. 9.

Office of the Communion. Melchior Canus, in his Defence of the Sacrifice of the Mass, has unawares confessed this truth, that Christ did only offer up at his last supper a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; "for to give thanks," says he, "after the Jewish manner, and take the cup into his hands, and lift it up, is truly to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving. When Christ therefore said, Do this, he plainly commanded his Apostles, that what they saw him do, they should do also, by offering up a sacrifice of eucharist, that is, of giving of thanks;"* and he expressly speaks against "Christ's offering up a mass-sacrifice for sin then when the day of the bloody sacrifice was now near, and the very hour approaching, and when their general sacrifice was nigh, by which it pleased the Father to forgive all sins,"† which is to make the eucharist what we are willing to own it, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and is, in a few words, to cut the very throat of their cause, as to this controversy.

3. The eucharist is called a sacrifice, as it is both a commemoration and a representation of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross; so it is a commemorative and representative sacrifice, as we call that a bloody tragedy which only represents a murder, and we give the name of the thing to that which is but the resemblance and likeness of it. The Jews called that the passover which was but a memorial of it; and the Apostle says, "we are buried with Christ in baptism, and rise with him," Col. ii. 12, when those are but remotely signified; thus "Christ is immolated and sacrificed in the eucharist," as St. Austin speaks, when, according to the gloss upon his words, "his immolation is represented, and there is made a memorial of his passion."‡ "Christ," says he, "was but once offered, and yet in

* Ritu quippe Judaico gratias agere calicem in manibus accipiendo et levando, vere est hostiam gratiarum actionis offerre: quum itaque dixit Dominus, Hoc facite, plane jussit Apostolis ut quod ipsum facere cernebant, id quoque illi facerent Eucharistiæ, hoc est gratiarum actionis hostiam exhibendo. Canus in locis Theolog. l. 12. p. 806.

† — Christum in cœna sacrificium, non pro peccato quidem, sed gratiarum tamen actione obtulisse, — quod cum sacrificii cruenti dies instaret jam plane, aut certe jam appropinquaret hora, non oportebat hostiam in cœna pro peccato mysticam exhibere, cum impenderet generalis hostia illa, in qua Patri complacuit omnia peccata resolvi. Ib. p. 834.

‡ Christus immolatur, i. e. Christi immolatio repræsentatur, et fit memoria Passionis. De Consec. Dist. 2. [cap. 26. Corp. Jur. Can. vol. 1. p. 1929. Lugd. 1671.]

the sacrament he is daily immolated ; neither does he lie who says Christ is immolated ; for if sacraments had not the likeness of those things whereof they are sacraments, they would be no sacraments at all ; but from this likeness they received the names of the things themselves.”* “Thus, as he there gives several instances, wherein that which is the memorial of a thing, does for its similitude to that thing of which it is a memorial receive its name, when Easter approacheth, we say, to-morrow or next day is the passion of Christ ; and on the Lord’s day, we say, this day Christ arose, when Christ’s passion was but once, and that several years ago, and that day is said to be Christ’s resurrection, which yet it is not.”† What we call then a sacrifice, is a memorial or a sign, and a representation of a sacrifice, as he says in another place,‡ “We offer the same sacrifice that Christ did ; for the passion of Christ is the sacrifice which we offer,”§ in St. Cyprian’s words ; or rather, “we perform a remembrance of a sacrifice,” as St. Chrysostom speaks,|| and after him Theophylact, “we always offer him, or rather, we make a remembrance of his offering ; ¶ do we not offer unbloody sacrifices ? yes, we make a remembrance of his bloody death,** so that instead of a sacrifice, *i. e.* a proper one, he hath commanded us perpetually

* Nonne Christus semel oblatus est ? et tamen in Sacramento quotidie populis immolatur ; nec mentitur qui dicit Christum immolari : si enim sacramenta non haberent similitudinem earum rerum quarum sunt sacramenta, nullo modo essent sacramenta, sed ex similitudine sæpe nomina earum accipiunt. August. Ep. 120. ad Honorat. [Ad. Bonifacium. Episcop. vol. 2. p. 267. Par. 1679.]

† Illud quod alicujus memoriale est propter similitudinem, sæpe ejus rei cujus memoriale est, nomen accipiat, ut appropinquante Paschate, dicimus cras aut parendie est Passio Christi, cum semel tantum ante multos annos sit passus, et die dominica dicimus, hodie Christus resurrexit, propter similitudinem enim dies ille id esse dicitur, quod tamen non est. Ibid.

‡ Quod appellamus sacrificium, signum est et repræsentatio sacrificii. August. de Civit. Dei, l. 10. c. 5. [vol. 7. p. 242.]

§ Passio enim Domini est sacrificium quod offerimus. Cypr. Ep. 3. [Epist. 63. p. 231. Venet. 1738.]

|| Οὐκ ἄλλην θυσίαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν αὐτὴν ἀεὶ ποιοῦμεν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀνάμνησιν ἐργαζόμεθα θυσίας. Chrysost. in Heb. 10. Hom. 17. [vol. 12. p. 169. Par. 1135.]

¶ Τὸν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἀεὶ προσφέρομεν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀνάμνησιν τῆς προσφορᾶς ἐκείνης ποιοῦμεν. Theophylact. in Heb. 10. [vol. 2. p. 719. Venet. 1754.]

** Οὐχὶ ἡμεῖς ἀεὶ θυσίας ἀναιμάκτους προσφέρομεν. Ναὶ ἀλλ’ ἀνάμνησιν ποιούμεθα τοῦ θανάτου. Ibid.

to offer up a memorial," as Eusebius more strictly words it.* If we come down to the elder Schoolmen, before the sacrifice of the mass was understood in so strict and proper a sense as it is now in the Church of Rome, and in the Council of Trent, we shall find them calling it a sacrifice only upon this account, that it is a memorial and representation of the true sacrifice, and of the sacred immolation made upon the altar of the cross, which are the very words of Peter Lombard,† Master of the Sentences, and Father of the Schoolmen, whom Thomas Aquinas seems wholly to follow, and more largely thus to explain the reason why the celebration of the sacrament may be called a sacrifice and immolation of Christ: "Because," says he, "first, it is an image of Christ's passion, for, as St. Austin says to Simplicius, images used to be called by the names of those things of which they are images; as when we look upon a painted table or wall, we say this is Cicero, and this is Sallust; but the celebration of this sacrament is a representative image of Christ's passion, which is the true immolation. Another way as to the effect of Christ's passion, it may be called a sacrifice, because by this sacrament we are made partakers of the fruits of the Lord's passion."‡ Had the Church of Rome gone no farther than this, and not made the eucharist a sacrifice in any other sense than as it is commemorative and exhibitivè of Christ's true sacrifice and immolation upon the cross, we had not blamed them, nor had there been any controversy between us in this matter; or had they been contented to have used the word sacrifice in a large and figurative and

* *Μνήμην ἡμῖν παρέδωκε ἀντὶ θυσίας τῷ Θεῷ διηνεκῶς προσφέρειν.* Euseb. Demonstrat. l. 1. c. 10. [ut supra, p. 38.]

† Ad hoc breviter dici potest, illud quod offertur et consecratur a sacerdote, vocari sacrificium et oblationem, quia memoria est et repræsentatio veri sacrificii, et sanctæ immolationis factæ in ara crucis. Lombard. l. 4. Dist. 12. [p. 301. Colon. Agr. 1566.]

‡ Tum quia hujus sacramenti celebratio, imago quædam est passionis Christi, tum etiam quia per hoc sacramentum participes efficimur fructus, Dominicæ Passionis ——— convenienter dicitur Christi immolatio. Primo quidem, quia sicut Augustinus ad Simplicium, solent imagines earum rerum nominibus appellari, quarum imagines sunt, sicut cum intuentes tabulam aut parietem pictum, dicimus, ille Cicero est, et ille Salustius; celebratio autem hujus sacramenti imago quædam est repræsentativa passionis Christi, quæ est vera ejus immolatio ——— alio modo quantum ad effectum passionis Christi, quia sc. per hoc sacramentum participes efficimur fructus Dominicæ passionis. Thom. Aquin. Sum. 3. Pars. qu. 23. [vol. 24. p. 450. col. 2. Venet. 1787.]

improper sense, as the Fathers do when they call the eucharist a sacrifice, and therefore they immediately correct themselves as it were with this addition, "or rather a remembrance of a sacrifice," and explain the reason why they give it that name: but this would not serve our adversaries' purpose, this would not make it a true, proper, propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and dead: this would not give it those virtues which they assign to it as a proper sacrifice in itself, distinct from its being a sacrament; this would not make it so applicable to others who never partook or communicated of it, and so would not make it of so great price and value, that is, so marketable to themselves; and therefore the Council of Trent condemns this notion of its being a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a mere commemoration of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, and not a propitiatory one, or that it profits him only that takes it: or that it ought not to be offered for the quick and dead, for sins, for punishments, for satisfactions, and other necessities.* They make it to have the true virtue of a sacrifice in itself, and a true price and *Λύτρον*, and compensation to God for sin, and a true satisfaction to Divine justice for the punishment thereof, as much as the sacrifice upon the cross, and that they have the power of applying this whensoever, and for whomsoever they offer it; which is to have the greatest treasure in the world in their hands, and to be able to make a proper propitiation for sin, which belongs only to Christ; but they can offer Christ as truly as he offered himself, and set him upon the altar as true a sacrifice as he hung upon the cross. Christ, I own, is in some sense offered up to God by every communicant in the sacrament, when he does mentally and internally offer him to God, and present as it were his bleeding Saviour to his Father, and desire him for his sake to be merciful to him and forgive him his sins; this internal oblation of Christ and his passion is made by every faithful Christian in his particular private devotions, and especially at the more solemn and public ones of the blessed sacrament. When he has the sacred symbols of Christ's death before him, and does then plead the virtue of Christ's sacrifice before God,

* Siquis dixerit Missæ Sacrificium tantum esse laudis et gratiarum actionis, aut nudam commemorationem sacrificii in cruce peracti, non autem propitiatorium, vel soli prodesse sumenti, neque pro vivis et defunctis, pro peccatis, pænis, satisfactionibus et aliis necessitatibus offerri debere, Anathema sit. Concil. Trid. de Sacrif. Miss. Canon. [Labbe ut supra, vol. 14. p. 855.]

not of the sacrifice then before him, but of the past sacrifice of the cross. This is all done by the inward acts, the faith, the devotion of the mind, whereby, as St. Austin says, "Christ is then slain to any one, when he believes him slain,* and when we believe in Christ from the very remains of this thought, Christ is daily immolated to us,"† as St. Jerome says, "when we hear the word of our Lord, his flesh and blood is as it were poured into our ears;"‡ and so St. Ambrose calls "the virgins minds those altars on which Christ is daily offered for the redemption of the body."§

The minister also does not only offer to God the oblations of the faithful at the altar, and their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise which it is his proper duty in their names to present unto God, but he does offer as it were Jesus Christ and his sacrifice for the people, by praying to God for the people as a public minister, in and through the merits of Christ's death and passion, and by consecrating and administering the blessed sacrament; which is hereby made not only a commemorative sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, but does with the outward sign really exhibit the thing signified to the people; so that it is no wonder to meet with the words offering, and offering Christ's body and blood, as attributed peculiarly to the minister, as in those known places of Ignatius's Epistles, "It is not lawful for the priest to offer without the leave of the bishop." And in Tertullian, "when the priest is wanting, thou baptizest and offerest, and art a priest to thyself;" and in the Council of Nice, where "deacons are forbid to offer the body of Christ," Can. 14. To offer, and to offer Christ's body and blood, is made the peculiar office of the priest, as he alone is the steward of these mysteries of God, and the proper minister to consecrate and celebrate this holy sacrament, and in that to offer up the people's requests to God in the name of Christ and his meritorious cross and passion, and by virtue of that to mediate for the people, and present as it were Christ's

* Tum Christus cuique occiditur, cum credit occisum. August. Quæst. Evang. l. 2.

† Cum credimus in Christum ex ipsis reliquiis cogitationis, Christus nobis quotidie immolatur. Idem in Psal. 73.

‡ Cum audimus sermonem Domini, caro Christi et sanguis ejus in auribus nostris funditur. Hieron. in Psal. 147. [vol. 7. Append. p. 385. Veron. 1737.]

§ Vestras mentes, confidenter altaria dixerim, in quibus quotidie pro redemptione corporis Christus offertur. Ambros. de Virg. l. 2. [vol. 2. p. 166. Par. 1690.]

sacrifice on their behalf; that is, Christ's body and blood as an objective sacrifice in heaven, and as formerly truly offered upon the cross, and now sacramentally and improperly upon the altar, but not as an external visible proper sacrifice, subjectively present and placed upon the altar by the hands of the priest, and by a visible and external action presented to God, and offered up as the Jewish sacrifices used to be, by any consumption or alteration, as they hold the sacrifice of the mass to be. No such can be found in any of the Fathers or ancient ecclesiastic writers, though they speak often of sacrifices and oblations, and sometimes of offering Christ, and the body of Christ in the eucharist, yet not at all in the present sense of the Romish Church, or according to the doctrine of the Council of Trent, or the writers since that; which how contrary it is to antiquity, I shall shew by a few general remarks and considerations.

1. Had they any such sacrifice, they might have given another answer to their Jewish and heathen adversaries, who charged them with the want of outward sacrifices and altars as with a great impiety; to which they made only this return in their Apologies, that they had indeed no proper altars, nor visible and external sacrifices, but instead of those they offered the more spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and of an honest and good mind, and of virtuous and holy actions, which were the only sacrifices of Christians, and more acceptable to God than any other: this is the answer which runs through all their excellent Apologies, in return to that accusation of their having no sacrifices, which they owned to be true in the sense their adversaries urged it; that is, that they had no proper external visible sacrifices, such as the Jews and heathens had, and such as the Roman Church will needs have the mass to be; but their sacrifices were of another nature, such as were so only in an improper and metaphorical sense, which the Romanists will by no means allow that of the eucharist to be. "We are not atheists," says Justin Martyr, as they were charged to be, because they had not the visible worship of sacrifices, "but we worship the Maker of all things, who needs not blood, or libations, or incense, with the word of prayer and thanksgiving, giving him praise as much as we can, and counting this the only honour worthy of him,* and we are per-

* "Αἱ θεοὶ μὲν οὐκ ἐσμὲν, τὸν δημιουργὸν τοῦδε τοῦ παντός σεβόμενοι ἀνεύδεῃ αἱμάτων, καὶ σπονδῶν, καὶ θυμιαμάτων,—λόγῳ εὐχῆς καὶ

suaded he needeth no material oblations from men.”* And in another place he says, “Prayers and praises made by good men, are the only perfect and acceptable sacrifices to God.”† “We are charged by some with atheism,” says Athenagoras, “who measure religion only by the way of sacrifices, and what do ye tell me of sacrifices which God wanteth not, though we ought to bring him an unbloody sacrifice, and to offer him a rational worship ;”‡ where the rational worship explains the meaning of the unbloody sacrifice. Tertullian, in his apologetic answering that charge, that Christians did not sacrifice for the emperors, “It follows,” says he, “by the same reason, we do not sacrifice for others, because neither do we do it for ourselves :”§ but in answer to this, he declares how Christians prayed for the Emperor, c. 30. And in another place he says, “they sacrificed for the Emperor’s health,” that is, “with a pure prayer, as God has commanded,|| and I offer to God,” says he, in the same apologetic speaking against other sacrifices, “a rich and greater sacrifice than he commanded the Jews, prayer from a chaste body, from an innocent soul, proceeding from the Holy Spirit.”¶ “This is the host to be offered,” says Minutius Felix, “a good mind, a pure soul, a sincere conscience ; these are our sacrifices, these are the sacred things of God,” in answer to their not having altars and shrines,** which objection, made

εὐχαριστίας—ὅση δύναμις αἰνοῦντες μόνην ἀξίαν αὐτοῦ τιμὴν ταύτην παραλαβόντες. Justin. Martyr. Apolog. 2. [Apolog. 1. n. 13.] [p. 50. Par. 1742.]

* Ἄλλ’ οὐ δέεσθαι τῆς παρὰ ἀνθρώπων ὑλικῆς προσφορᾶς προειλήφμεν τὸν Θεόν. Ibid. [p. 48.]

† Εὐχαὶ καὶ εὐχαρισταὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀξίων γινόμεναι τέλειαι μόναι καὶ εὐάρεστοι εἰσὶ τῷ Θεῷ. Dialog. cum Tryph. [Ibid. p. 210.]

‡ Ἐπεὶ δὲ οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἐπικαλούντων ἡμῖν τὴν Ἀθεότητα—μετροῦντες τὴν εὐσέβειαν θυσιῶν νόμῳ—τί δὲ μοὶ ὀλοκαυτώσεων, ὧν μὴ δεῖται ὁ Θεός ; καὶ τοι προσφέρειν δέον ἀναίμακτον θυσίαν καὶ τὴν λογικὴν προσάγειν λατρείαν. Athenag. Legat. pro Christ. [Apud Justin. Ibid. p. 289.]

§ Pro imperatoribus sacrificia non penditis, sequitur ut eadem ratione pro aliis non sacrificemus, quia nec pro nobis ipsis. Tertul. Apologet. adversus gentes, c. 10. [p. 10. Par. 1695.]

|| Sacrificamus pro salute Imperatoris, i. e. pura prece sicut Deus præcepit. Idem ad Scapul. [p. 69.]

¶ Ei offero opimam et majorem hostiam quam ipse mandavit, orationem de carne pudica, de anima innocenti, de spiritu sancto profectam. Ib. Apol. c. 30. [p. 27.]

** Cum sit litabilis hostia bonus animus et pura mens, et sincera conscientia—hæc nostra sacrificia, hæc Dei sacra sunt.—Minuc. Octav. sc. delubra et aras non habemus. Ib.

also by Celsus, is after the same manner replied to by Origen : “ Our altars are the mind of every one that is righteous, from whence is truly sent up sweet-smelling sacrifices,” to wit, “ prayers from a pure conscience.”* Lactantius, when he proposes to speak of sacrifice, shews how unsuitable an external one is to God, and that the proper sacrifice to him, “ is praise and an hymn : blessing alone is his sacrifice ; we ought therefore to sacrifice unto God by word ; the chief way of worshipping God is thanksgiving out of the mouth of a just man directed to God.”† Could those excellent advocates for Christianity have no other ways assailed the charge drawn up against them, that they had no sacrifices like all other religions, but by flying to such spiritual and improper sacrifices as praise and thanksgiving ? This plainly demonstrates that they had no proper and visible sacrifice, which indeed in so many express words they deny when the word *sacrifice* was understood strictly and properly.‡ Had they so accounted the sacrifice of the mass, as our adversaries do now, this might have been given in as the Christian sacrifice, instead of all others ; and yet it is strange they scarce ever mention the eucharist in those discourses of theirs, wherein if it had been a sacrifice, it had been most proper and pertinent to have spoken of it ; and the sacrifice of a man under the species of bread and wine, had outdone all the Jewish and most of the heathen sacrifices, and had been a full answer to the objection as it was made by them. “ But,” say our adversaries, “ they would not speak of so great a mystery as the eucharist to unbelievers, which they were used to conceal even from catechumens that were not yet perfectly initiated into the Christian rites.” But surely they would not have told a downright lie, and denied that they had any proper sacrifices, had the eucharist been one, as we see

* Βωμοὶ μὲν εἰσιν ἡμῖν τὸ ἐκάστου τῶν δικαίων ἡγεμονικόν, ἀφ’ οὗ ἀναπέμπεται ἀληθῶς καὶ νοητῶς εὐώδη θυμιάματα προσευχαὶ ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως καθαρᾶς. Origen. contra Celsum. l. 8. p. 389. [vol. 1. p. 755. Par. 1733.]

† Nunc de Sacrificio ipso pauca dicemus,—sacrificium laus et hymnus—hujus sacrificii sola benedictio ; verbo ergo sacrificare oportet Deo—summus igitur colendi Dei ritus est, ex ore justi hominis ad Deum directa laudatio. Lactantius de vero cultu. l. 6. § 25. [vol. 1. p. 436. Wirceb. 1783.]

‡ Quid ergo ? sacrificia censetis nulla esse omnino facienda ? nulla. Arnob. Disput. adversus Gent. l. 7. [p. 223. Wirceb. 1783.] Οὐ θύομεν—θύσιν οὐ προσάγομεν. Clemens Alexandrin. Strom. l. 7. p. 707. Par. [p. 836. Venet. 1757.]

they did ; neither did they keep the service of the eucharist so secret as not to let the heathens be acquainted with it, as is plain from Justin Martyr's Apology, where he largely discourses of its whole performance to Antoninus the Emperor ;* and to take off this little subterfuge of our adversaries, I shall add one thing more on this head, which shews beyond all dispute, that the Primitive Church had no such opinion of the eucharist's being a sacrifice, and that is the same charge of Julian the Apostate, who very well understood Christianity, and had been a reader of it in the Church ; who, notwithstanding, objected the same thing to the Christians with the Jews and heathens, viz. that they had no sacrifices, and that they did not erect altars to sacrifice upon to God.† He knew too well the mysteries of their religion, so as not to be ignorant that the eucharist was a proper sacrifice, had it really been believed to be so by the Church at that time ; and Cyril's answer to him plainly shews that it was not, for he owns the charge, and pleads only that we have "spiritual and mental sacrifices, which are much better,"‡ and instead of sheep and oxen, and the like visible sacrifices, "we offer," says he, "for a sweet savour, faith, hope, charity, righteousness, and praise,"§ but not a tittle of offering the sacrifice of the mass, which would have been greatly to the purpose had there been any such thing ; and there was no reason to have refused the mentioning it to Julian, who had once been a Christian, and so must certainly have known it, had there been any such thing in the Christian Church.

2. When the Fathers do call the eucharist a sacrifice, they add such epithets and phrases to it as do quite spoil the Roman notion of it, for they call it a spiritual sacrifice, τὴν πνευματικὴν θυσίαν, as it is in Eusebius,|| Cyril of Jerusalem,¶ Theodoret,** and others, besides the Greek Liturgies and

* Apolog. 2. versus finem.

† παράγειν δὲ ἱερεῖα βωμῶ καὶ θύειν παρητήσασθε. Julian. apud Cyril. Alexand. contra Jul. l. 10. p. 345. [343.] [Lut. 1638.]

‡ Θύομεν δὲ μακρῶ κρεῖττον ἡμεῖς νυνὶ ἢ ἐκεῖνοι πάλαι—θυσίας τὰς πρὸς ἡμῶν πνευματικὰς δηλονότι καὶ νοητὰς. Ibid. p. 343. [345.]

§ προσκομίζομεν γὰρ εἰς ὁσμὴν εὐωδίας τῷ Θεῷ πάντα τρόπον ἐπιεικείας, πίστιν, ἐλπίδα, ἀγάπην, δικαιοσύνην—ἀκαταλήκτους δοξολογίας, καὶ τὰς ἑτέρας τῶν ἀρετῶν. Ib.

|| Demonstrat. Evangel. l. 5. c. 3. [ut supra, p. 223.]

¶ Mystagog. Catech. 5. [p. 327. Venet. 1763.]

** Histor. Relig. [vol. 3. p. 1234. Hal. 1771.]

Apostolic Constitutions, where the word spiritual is generally added to it. Now a spiritual sacrifice they must own, is not a proper one, for it cannot be an external and visible one, nor is there any matter or substance to be destroyed. So it is called also *θυσία λογική*, a reasonable sacrifice;* so then it cannot be an outward bodily one which the priest takes up in his hands and sets upon the altar; it is called an unbloody one, not only by the Fathers, but themselves; but if it be Christ's body, it is not without blood; and though it be unbloody in the manner of oblation, yet it could not be called so generally and in itself. It is called a mystic and symbolic sacrifice, and that is very different from a true one. Christ is said to be there sacrificed without being sacrificed,† *i. e.* in figure and representation, "he is offered in image," as St. Ambrose expressly says,‡ and as it is in the Book of Sacraments attributed to him, "this oblation is for a figure of the body and blood of Jesus Christ."§ If it be a figure it cannot be the thing itself, no more than a man is his own picture: it is called also a memorial and commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ, as St. Austin says, "Christians by the holy oblation at the eucharist, and by partaking of the body and blood of Christ, celebrate the memory of the same sacrifice that was accomplished."|| "We offer," says St. Chrysostom, "but it is by making a remembrance of Christ's death, and we offer the same sacrifice, or rather a remembrance of a sacrifice."¶ And Eusebius, in his Demonstrations, giving an account why Christians do not offer sacrifices to God as the Jews did, says, "Christ having offered an admirable sacrifice, and an excellent victim to his Father for the salvation of us all, hath ordered us to offer

* Constitut. Apost. l. 6. c. 23. [ut supra, vol. 1. p. 403.] Cyril. Cat. Mystag. 5. Chrysost. Hom. 11. in Heb. [vol. 12. p. 115. Par. 1735.]

† Ἀμνὸν Θεοῦ ἀθύτως ὑπὸ τῶν ἱερέων θυόμενον, Diatypos. Concil. Niceni apud Gelas. Cyzic.

‡ Offertur in Imagine. Ambros. de Officiis, l. 1. c. 48. [vol. 2. p. 63. Par. 1690.]

§ Quod fit in figuram corporis et sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi. De Sacram. l. 4. c. 5. [Ibid. p. 372.]

|| Jam Christiani peracti ejusdem sacrificii memoriam celebrant sacrosancta oblatione et participatione corporis et sanguinis Christi. August. contra Faust. l. 20. c. 18. [vol. 8. p. 345. Par. 1688.]

¶ Προσφέρομεν μὲν, ἀλλ' ἀνάμνησιν ποιούμενοι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ — Οὐκ ἄλλην θυσίαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν αὐτὴν αἰεὶ ποιούμεν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀνάμνησιν ἐργαζόμεθα θυσίας. Chrysost. in Heb. Hom. 17. [ut supra, p. 169.]

always to God a memorial instead of a sacrifice,"* or in the place of a sacrifice, as the words and drift of the discourse clearly imply. If it be then a memorial of a sacrifice, it cannot be the sacrifice itself, for the thing remembered must be distinct from that which is to remember it by; and if it be performing a remembrance of a sacrifice rather than a sacrifice, and the memorial of a sacrifice instead, or in the place of a sacrifice, these accounts of it do most perfectly destroy, and are wholly inconsistent with that other notion of its being in itself a true and proper sacrifice.

Thirdly, The novelty of private masses, which were brought in by making the eucharist a sacrifice to God instead of a sacrament to be partaken by Christians, is a plain argument of the late and novel doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, as they are a certain consequence of it; for when it began to be believed that the eucharist was a true sacrifice, that it was beneficial and of extraordinary virtue merely as it was offered to God, without being received by themselves, then the people left off frequent communicating according to the primitive custom, in which there is no such thing to be found as is now introduced into the Church by this new doctrine, namely, the priests' communicating alone without the people, and celebrating mass without the communion of others. Bellarmine owns that there is no express instance to be found of this in any of the ancients, but this, he says, may be gathered from conjectures;† but how groundless they are, and how contrary these private masses be to the primitive practice I shall shew from certain and undeniable authorities. Justin Martyr, in his account of Christian assemblies, and their manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper, says, "The deacons give to every one of those that are present to partake of the blessed bread and wine."‡ Ignatius, who was before him, says, "One bread is

* Θαυμάσιον θῦμα καὶ σφάγιον ἐξαίρετον τῷ πατρὶ καλλιερησάμενος ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμῶν ἀνήνεγκε σωτηρίας, μνήμην καὶ ἡμῖν παραδούς ἀντὶ θυσίας τῷ Θεῷ διηνεκῶς προσφέρειν. Euseb. Demonstrat. Evang. l. 1. c. 10. [Ibid. p. 38.]

† Nam etiamsi nusquam expresse legamus a veteribus oblatum sacrificium sine communione alicujus vel aliquorum præter ipsum sacerdotem, tamen id possumus ex conjecturis facile colligere. Bellarm. de Missa, l. 2. c. 9. [vol. 3. p. 474. col. 2. Prag. 1721.]

‡ Διδόασιν ἐκάστῳ τῶν παρόντων μεταλαβεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ εὐχαριστηθέντος ἄρτου καὶ εἵνου. Justin. Martyr. Apolog. 2. [Apolog. 1.] [ut supra, p. 83.]

broken to all, and one cup is distributed to every one.”* The Apostolic Canons command all the faithful who were present at the prayers and reading of the Scriptures, to continue also at the Communion, or else commands them to be turned out of the Church.† So do the ancient canons of the Council of Antioch excommunicate all those who come to the Church and prayers with their brethren, but refuse to communicate of the holy eucharist.‡ So great a crime was it for any not to keep to constant communion, which was to be done as much by all the faithful as by the priest himself; every Christian in those devout ages, who was baptized and had not notoriously violated his baptismal covenant so as to be put into the state and number of the public penitents, did always communicate as often as there was any sacrament, which was, I believe, as often as they assembled for public worship; and he that had not done that in those first and purest times, would have been thought almost to have been a deserter, and to have renounced his Christianity. All the catechumens indeed, or the candidates for Christianity, who were admitted to the prayers and sermons, but were not yet baptized, they were commanded to withdraw when the mass or communion-service began; and so were the penitents and the *Energumeni*; and this is the true meaning of the word *Missa*, the deacon in the Latin Church crying out, *Ite, Missa est*, when they came to the office of the eucharist. In the Apostolic Constitutions,§ he speaks to them particularly, and dismisses them in these words, προέλθετε οἱ κατηχούμενοι, προέλθετε οἱ ἐνεργούμενοι, ἀπολύεσθε οἱ ἐν μετανοίᾳ, so that only the πιστοὶ, *faithful*, who received the communion, were allowed to be present at the celebration of it; which is a very good argument against our adversaries’ opinion of the sacrifice of the mass; for had they believed the eucharist, though received only by the priest, had done good as a sacrifice to those who were present, although they did not partake of it, as they now do in the Church of Rome, what need they have put out and excluded all those who were non-communicants? The Jews did not shut the people out of the temple when the

* Εἰς ἄρτος τοῖς πᾶσιν ἐθρούφθη, καὶ ἐν ποτήριον τοῖς ὅλοις διενεμήθη. Ignat. Epist. ad Philadelph. [p. 224. Lips. 1699.]

† Canon. 9. [Labbe, ut supra, vol. 1. p. 28.]

‡ ἀποστρεφόμενους τὴν μετάληψιν τῆς εὐχαριστίας τούτους ἀποβλήτους γίνεσθαι. Concil. Antioch. Can. 2.

§ L. 8. c. 6, 7, 9. [Ibid. p. 466, 470.]

sacrifice was offering. If the eucharist, as a sacrifice, had been a part of worship only to God, an oblation to him, and not a sacrament to be received by themselves, why might not they have been present at it, as well as at the prayers which were offered to God, and at all the other parts of their religious worship? The most ancient accounts we have of the manner of celebrating the eucharist, and the most ancient liturgies or eucharistic forms have not the least shadow of any private communion by the priest alone, but always speak of the communion of others with him; in the Apostolic Constitutions, there is a relation in what order all the faithful received: "First the bishop, then the priests and deacons, then the deaconesses and virgins, and widows, then all the whole people in order, and after all have received, then the deacons take away the remainder." St. Cyril speaks plainly of numbers receiving the eucharist, and not of a single person, for he mentions the deacons speaking to them at first to embrace each other (*ἀλλήλους ἀπολάβετε*) and give the kiss of charity: those very ancient forms and responses, "Lift up your hearts," and the answer, "We lift them up unto the Lord,"* "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God, it is just and meet so to do," and afterwards *ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις*, these all shew that the priest did not communicate alone, but had always the company of others at the sacrament to join with him. St. Denis, called the Areopagite, speaks of the priests exhorting others at the communion, and praying that they who partake of these mysteries may partake of them worthily. The same is in all the Liturgies which go under the name of St. James, St. Mark, and St. Peter, in which there are the distinct parts of the people as well as of the priest, as when the priest is to say, "Peace be with you all," the people are to answer, "And with thy spirit;" and the service is so framed, as to suppose and require company in communicating, or else it would be nonsensical and ridiculous for the priest alone to pray to God, "to breathe upon us his servants that are present, to grant that the sacraments may be to all us that partake of them, the communion of the blessedness of eternal life;" and after the communion is over, "after all have received," for the priest to give the blessing to all, and pray "God to bless and protect us all who were partakers of the mysteries:" the same form of speaking in the plural is in the more authentic Liturgies of St.

* "Ἄνω τὰς καρδίας ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν κύριον.

Basil and St. Chrysostom, where it was very odd for the priest to exhort others to pray, to give thanks, and the like, and to pray God, that "they may be worthy partakers of the sacrament," if none were to partake of it but himself. The Roman Missal, which is much older than these private masses, or than the doctrine of the mass, as I shall presently shew, speaks after the same manner, and makes the priest pray "for all that are present, and that all who have communicated may be filled with all heavenly benediction and grace." These must be all very improper for the priest to say, when he communicates by himself, and he may with as good reason make a congregation by himself alone, as make a communion. Private masses then which sprang up from the sacrifice of the mass, and are wholly suited and agreeable to that doctrine, these being so contrary to the best antiquity, shew, that that doctrine also on which they are founded, and from whence they arose, is so too. And I have the more largely considered these, because they are another great corruption of the eucharist of the Roman Church, though they are originally derived from the sacrifice of the mass.

Fourthly, The very Canon of the Mass, as it is at present in the Roman Church, has very little in it agreeable to this new doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass; but though it is somewhat difficult to give a certain account of the time of its composition, it being made at first by an unknown author, whom St. Gregory calls Scholasticus, who is supposed by some to be Pope Gelasius, though had St. Gregory known this, he would hardly have given him that name; and it having a great many additions given to it by several popes, as is owned by their own writers upon the *Ordo Romanus*,* yet it is no doubt much ancients than their present doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, which is very near as late as the Council of Trent. The first manner of celebrating the communion was very plain and simple, so that Gregory tells us, "The Apostles consecrated the host of oblation only with the Lord's prayer;"† if they did so, and used no other form in that sacred office, it is certain they could not make a sacrifice of the eu-

* Wallafrid. Strabo de rebus Eccles. c. 22. [p. 680, &c.] Micrologus de Ecclesiast. Observat. c. 12. [p. 738.] Beruo Augiensis, c. 1. [p. 697, 698.] et alii in collectione Hittorprii. [Par. 1620.]

† Mos Apostolorum fuit, ut ad ipsam solummodo orationem Dominicam oblationis hostiam consecrarent. Gregorii Regist. Epistol. 64. l. 7. [Epis. 12. lib. 9. ind. 2. vol. 2. p. 940. Par. 1705.]

charist, nor offer it as such to God, because there are no words or expressions in that prayer, whereby any such thing should be meant or signified; so that this is a most authentic testimony against any such Apostolic practice; but the present *Canon Missæ*, or Communion Office of the Roman Church, does not fully come up to, nor perfectly express or contain the present doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, there is no offering of Christ's body and blood under the species of bread and wine, in any formal words, as might be expected in conformity to their Trent doctrine; nor is there any mention of Christ's being there in his natural body, or offered to God by the priest as a propitiatory sacrifice for quick and dead, for sins, for punishments, and for other necessities. Neither this, nor their great doctrine of transubstantiation, is contained in their present office; so that it is to me a plain evidence of the novelty of both of them, and that they are a great deal later than the Canon of the Mass; there are several prayers indeed that make mention of a sacrifice and of an oblation, but most of them, and the most express of them are before consecration; so that they plainly belong to those gifts and oblations, which according to the primitive custom were brought by the communicants, and which, as I have shewn, were one great reason of the eucharist being called a sacrifice: "God is desired to accept and bless these gifts, these presents, these holy and pure sacrifices which we offer to thee, for thy holy catholic Church—together with thy servant our Pope N. and our Bishop N. and for all the orthodox, and for all those that hold the catholic and apostolic faith;"* and then follows the commemoration prayer, "Remember, O Lord, thy servants and thy handmaids, N. and N. and all those who are present, whose faith and devotion is known to thee, for whom we offer to thee, or who offer to thee this sacrifice of praise for themselves, and for all others, for the redemption of their souls, for the hope of their salvation and their safety, and render their vows to thee the eternal, living, and true God;" then after the memorial of the saints, "We beseech thee, O Lord, that thou wouldest mercifully receive this oblation of our service and of all thy family, and dispose our days in peace, and command us to be delivered from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the fold of thine elect, through Jesus Christ our Lord;" then immediately follows this prayer, "Which

* See *Canon Missæ*. [ut supra, p. 62.]

oblation, thou, O God, we beseech, vouchsafe to make altogether blessed, ascribed, ratified, reasonable and acceptable." *Ascripta* and *Rata* are words which they are as much puzzled to understand as I am to translate. All these prayers are before consecration, so that they cannot belong to the sacrifice of Christ's body, but only to the oblation of the gifts, and the sacrifice of praise, as it is there expressly called; and yet these are a great deal more full and large than the prayers after consecration, wherein there is no manner of mention of offering Christ's body and blood, but only offering the consecrated elements as they were offered before when they were unconsecrated, "We offer unto thy excellent majesty of thy gifts and presents, a pure host, an holy host, an immaculate host, the holy bread of eternal life, and the cup of eternal salvation." The first composers would have used other words than bread and cup, had they meant thereby Christ's very natural body and blood, and it is plain that they were not those by what follows, "Upon which vouchsafe to look with a propitious and kind countenance, and to accept of them as thou didst accept the gifts of thy righteous child Abel, and the sacrifice of our patriarch Abraham, and that which Melchizedek thy high priest offered to thee, an holy sacrifice, an immaculate host." Now to compare Christ's very body and blood with the sacrifices of Abel, Abraham, and Melchizedek, and to desire God to look upon his own Son, in whom he was always well pleased, with a propitious and kind countenance, is very strange and uncouth, to say no worse of it; and to desire according to what follows, "that God would command these to be carried by the hands of his holy angel into the sublime altar, in the presence of thy Divine Majesty;" these cannot be meant or understood of Christ's natural body and blood, which is already in heaven, and is there to appear in the presence of God for us, as Menardus expressly owns in his notes upon this prayer in Gregory's Sacramentary;* and if so, as we have the confession of the most learned ritualist of their own Church, then there is nothing at all in the Canon of the Mass that does really belong to these, or that does any way express or come up to the new Tridentine doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass; so that we need go no farther than their own Office to shew the novelty of this; and as in other things, namely, in their

* Jube hæc perferri, non Christi corpus sed memoriam passionis, fidem, preces et vota Fidelium. Menardi Notæ et Observat. in Lib. Sacrament. Gregorii Papæ, p. 19. [Par. 1642.]

prayers to saints, they are forced to use very gentle and softening interpretations to make the words signify otherwise than what they do in their proper and literal meaning, so here they must put a more strong and hard sense upon them, than they will really bear, or was at first intended, to make them speak the new meaning of the mass sacrifice; so that they must here contrive a way to raise the sense of the Church, as they do in other cases to let it down, or else their prayers and their doctrines will never be brought to suit well together. The commemoration for the dead has nothing in it but a mere remembrance and a prayer, "that God would give to them a place of refreshment, light, and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord," not through the merit or virtue of that sacrifice which is then offered, there is not the least mention or intimation of any such thing, nor any expression that looks that way. The priest indeed, a little before he communicates, prays Christ "to deliver him from all his sins, and from all evils, by this his most sacred body and blood," which he may do without its being a sacrifice, and I know no Protestant would scruple the joining in such a petition. There is a prayer indeed at the last, by the priest to the Holy Trinity, "that the sacrifice which he has unworthily offered to the eyes of the Divine Majesty, may be acceptable to it, and through its mercy be propitiabile for himself, and for those for whom he has offered it," and this seems the fullest and the most to the purpose of the mass sacrifice, and yet it may very fairly be understood in a sound sense without any such thing, as it is a sacrifice of prayer, and as God is thereby rendered merciful and propitious both to ourselves and others; but it is to be observed, that this prayer is not in the old *Ordo Romanus* where the others are, nor in the *Gelasian* or *Gregorian Missal*, nor in any other ancient one put out by *Thomasius*, *Menardus*, *Pamelius*, *Cardinal Bona*, or *Mabillon*, but was, I suppose, added of later days to those old forms.

Fifthly, The new addition to the form of ordination in the Roman Church, whereby* "power is given to the priest to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate masses both for the dead and living," this discovers the novelty of their doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass; for there was no such form of ordination in the Primitive Church, nor is there any such thing mentioned

* *Accipe potestatem offerre sacrificium Deo, Missasque celebrare tam pro vivis quam pro mortuis.*

in any Latin or Greek Ordinal for near a thousand years after Christ: the most ancient account of the manner of ordaining is in the fourth Council of Carthage, where there is nothing else but * the episcopal benediction and imposition of hands by the bishop and all the priests. In the Apostolic Constitutions, there is a pretty long prayer of the bishop's over the priest who is to be ordained,† “that God would look upon his servant chosen into the presbytery by the vote and judgment of all the clergy, and fill him with the spirit of grace and wisdom to help and govern the people with a pure heart; — that he may be filled with healing operations, and instructive discourse, and may teach the people with all meekness, and may serve God sincerely with a pure understanding, and a willing soul, and may perform the sacred and pure offices for the people, through Jesus Christ.” And this, with laying on of hands, is all the form of ordination which is so anciently prescribed. St. Denis, who is falsely called the Areopagite, but was a writer probably of the fifth century before the Council of Chalcedon, he has acquainted us with much the like manner of ordination in that time,‡ “The priest kneeling before the altar, with the holy Bible and the bishop's hand over his head, was consecrated with holy prayers.” Only there was then added the sign of the cross, and the kiss of peace, but no such thing as the receiving of power to offer sacrifice, and to celebrate masses for the living and the dead. This was a thing unheard of in the ancient Church, either Greek or Latin, neither was it

* Presbyter cum ordinatur, Episcopo eum benedicente et manum super caput ejus tenente, etiam omnes Presbyteri qui præsentes sunt, manus suas juxta manum Episcopi super caput illius tenent. Canon 3. Concil. Carthag,

† “Επιδε ἐπὶ τὸν δοῦλόν σου τοῦτον τὸν ψήφῳ καὶ κρίσει τοῦ κλήρου παντός εἰς πρεσβυτέριον ἐπιδοθέντα, καὶ ἔμπλησον αὐτὸν πνεῦμα χάριτος καὶ συμβουλίας τοῦ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι καὶ κυβερνᾶν τὸν λαόν σου ἐν καθαρᾷ καρδίᾳ — “Ὅπως πληθεῖς ἐνεργημάτων ἱατρικῶν καὶ λόγου διδακτικοῦ ἐν πραότητι παιδεύῃ σου τὸν λαὸν καὶ δουλεύῃ σοι εἰλικρινῶς ἐν καθαρᾷ διανοίᾳ καὶ ψυχῇ θελούσῃ, καὶ τὰς ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ ἱερουργίας ἀμώμους ἐκτελῇ διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ σου. Constitut. Apostol. de Ordinat. Presbyt. l. 8. c. 16. [Ibid. vol. 1. p. 488.]

‡ “Ὁ μὲν ἱεράρχης ἐπὶ τὴν ἱεραρχικὴν τελείωσιν προσαγόμενος, ἄμφω τῷ πόδε κλίνας ἐπίπροσθεν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, ἐπὶ κεφαλῆς ἔχει τὰ παράδοτα λόγια καὶ τὴν ἱεραρχικὴν χεῖρα, καὶ τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ πρὸς τοῦ τελειοῦντος αὐτὸν ἱεράρχου ταῖς παναγεστάταις ἐπικλήσεσιν ἐπιτελειοῦται. Dionys. Hierarch. Eccles. c. 5. [vol. 1. p. 236. Venet. 1755.]

brought into the Latin till about the year 1000, as is confessed by Morinus;* nor is it to this day used in the Greek. In that age of ignorance and superstition, when transubstantiation and a great many other errors and corruptions crept into the Latin Church, this new form of ordination was set up, and the priests had a new power given them, and a new work put upon them, which was to sacrifice and say masses for the quick and dead, which had it been agreeable to the doctrine of the Primitive Church, and had there been any such opinion of the mass sacrifice as there is now in the Roman Church, there would no doubt have been the same form of ordination, or something like this would have been specified in the consecration of a priest. They now make this the great and proper office of the priest, and these words, with the delivery of the holy vessels or sacred instruments, is made the very matter and form of the sacrament of orders, and it is made a charge by them against our ordinations, that we want this essential part of priesthood, which is to offer sacrifice; but since the Primitive Church had no such form, as is fully made out by Morinus, a man of great credit and learning among themselves, who has made a great collection of the most ancient Ordinals to shew this, and there is no such thing now in the Greek Churches, as appears from Habertus on the Greek Pontifical, we have hereby not only a full defence of our own orders, without any such form, but a plain demonstration of the novelty of that in the Roman Church, and consequently of that doctrine which is brought in by it, or perhaps was the occasion of it, of the sacrifice of the mass.

4. It is in itself unreasonable and absurd, and has a great many gross errors involved in it. As,

1. It makes an external visible sacrifice of a thing that is perfectly invisible, so that the very matter and substance of the sacrifice which they pretend to offer, is not seen or perceived by any of the senses; for it is Christ's body, and not the bread and wine, which is the subject-matter and the sacrifice itself. Now this is the strangest sacrifice that ever was in the world, a visible oblation of an invisible thing; had the Jews offered their sacrifices in this manner, they had offered nothing at all, and had Christ thus offered himself to God upon the cross only in phantasm and appearance, as some heretics would have had him, and not in the visible substance

* De sacris Ordinatis. pars 3. c. 6.

of his body, it would have been only a fantastic sacrifice, and we had been redeemed by a shadow. It is contrary to the nature of all proper sacrifices to have the thing offered not to be seen, and not visibly presented to God; an invisible sacrifice may as well have an invisible altar, and an invisible oblation, and an invisible priest, for why the one should be more visible than the other I cannot imagine. Bellarmine's definition of a sacrifice is this, which we are very willing to allow of, but how it agrees to the sacrifice of the mass, I cannot see:* "A sacrifice is an external oblation made to God alone, whereby for the acknowledging of human infirmity, and owning of the Divine Majesty, some sensible and permanent thing is by a lawful minister, and by a mystic rite, consecrated and changed." Now Christ's body and blood being the *res sacrificii*, the matter of the sacrifice, and that being offered to God, I cannot understand how that is a *res sensibilis*, a sensible thing in the eucharist, and therefore how according to him it is a sacrifice; so necessary is it for a great man to blunder in a bad cause, when he must either weigh in a false balance, or whatever he says will quickly be found light.

2. It makes a proper sacrifice without a proper sacrificing act; the consumption and destruction of the sacrifice was always necessary, as well as the offering and bringing it to the altar, and without this it was not properly given to God, but kept to themselves as much as it was before, if it were not either poured out, or burnt, or slain, which was parting with the thing, and transferring it wholly to God; and this consumption is so essential to all sacrifices, that Bellarmine puts it into the definition of a sacrifice, and says,† "That to a true sacrifice it is required, that that which is offered to God in sacrifice be plainly destroyed."‡ But how will this now belong to Christ's body in the sacrifice of the mass? Is that destroyed there? Is not that the sacrifice? And is not that now in a glorious impassable state, that can suffer no destruction? Bellarmine is in a sad plunge to get out here, and lets us see how he throws himself about, but sticks fast still in the mire.

* *Sacrificium est oblatio externa facta soli Deo, qua agnitionem humanæ infirmitatis et professionem divinæ Majestatis a legitimo Ministro res aliqua sensibilis et permanens ritu mystico consecratur et transmutatur.* Bellarm. de Missa. l. 1. c. 2. [vol. 3. p. 415. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

† Ut supra.

‡ Ad verum sacrificium requiritur, ut id quod offertur Deo in sacrificium plane destruat. Id de Miss. l. 1. c. 2. [Ibid. p. 416. col. 1.]

“By consecration,” says he, “the thing which is offered is ordained to a true, real and outward change and destruction, which was necessary to the being of a sacrifice ; for by consecration the body of Christ receives the form of food, but food is for eating, and by this it is ordained for change and destruction :” is the body of Christ then destroyed by eating ? If it be, they are true cannibals, or Capernaitical feeders that eat it : I had thought that Christ’s body was not thus grossly to be broke by the teeth, or chewed by the jaws of the priest or communicants, so as to be destroyed by them. The gloss upon Berengarius’s recantation says, this is a greater heresy than his, unless it be understood of the species, and not of the body itself ; and they generally disown that Christ’s body is thus carnally eaten, but only the sacramental species ; but the species are not the sacrifice, and therefore it is not sufficient that they be destroyed, but the sacrifice, that is, the body of Christ must be so. Christ’s body, as it is food, is not a sacrifice, but a sacrament ; they make two distinct things of it, as it is a sacrifice, and as it is a sacrament ; as it lies in the pix, or is carried to the sick, it is food and a sacrament, but they will not allow it to be then a sacrifice, and on Maundy Thursday it is eaten, but not accounted a sacrifice.* The consumption then by eating belongs to it, not as a sacrifice, but a sacrament, and the body of Christ is not then consumed, but only the species ; nay, the body of Christ is not then consumed under the species, for the real consumption belongs only to the species, and not to the body of Christ, which is no more truly consumed with them, or under them, than it is as sitting in heaven, no more than a man’s flesh is consumed, when only his clothes or his mantle is tore, though he were in them. “What though it ceases to be really on the altar, and ceases to be a sensible food,” as he farther explains, or rather entangles it : is Christ’s body ever a sensible food ? and is its ceasing to be upon the altar, a consumption of it ? Then Isaac was consumed when he was took off from the altar on which Abraham had laid him, and if his father had been as subtle as our Roman sophisters and sacrificers, he might only have covered him with the skin of the ram, and have consumed that as an external species, by fire, and so Isaac had been both

* *Feria sexta majoris hebdomadæ non censeatur sacrificium Missæ proprie celebrari, licet vera hostia adsit, et frangatur et consumatur. Bellarm. de Miss. l. 1. c. 27. B. [Ibid. p. 457. col. 2.]*

sacrificed, and consumed, and destroyed too, and yet have been as live as ever for all this. Such absurdities do they run into, when they will make their notion suit of a true sacrifice, and that which is not one; and a man of sense must yet destroy his sense, one would think, before he can talk at this rate.

They are most sadly nonplussed, and most extremely divided among themselves, about the essence of this their sacrifice of the mass, and wherein they should place the true sacrificial act, whether in the oblation of the elements, or in consecration of them, whereby they suppose them turned into Christ's body and blood, and so in the express oblation of those to God, or in the fraction and commistion of the consecrated elements, or in the manducation and consumption of them. Suarez and Vasquez, and others, are for the last of all; the Council of Trent seems to be for oblation; Bellarmine is for consecration, whereby instead of bread and wine, Christ's body and blood are placed upon the altar, and ordered for consumption. Melchior Canus is for all the four last, and he tells us it is the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas,* "that the sacrifice is performed before the fraction of the elements, and that the sumption of them belongs properly to the sacrament, the oblation to the sacrifice;" so that they know not what to pitch upon to constitute it a sacrifice; and if we examine them all, we shall find no true proper sacrificial act in any of them; the oblation of the elements before consecration can by no means make such a sacrifice as they design, for that is but an offering of earthly things, not of Christ's body, neither are they thereby changed or consumed, and though they are an offering, they are not a proper sacrifice, though in some sense they are a sacrifice, and were accounted so by the Fathers, as I have shewn. The fraction of the elements after they are consecrated, which is done by the priest, not for distribution, for they give them whole to the people, but for another mystical reason, this is not the formal essence of the sacrifice, for Christ, they own, did not break them in this manner at his last supper, when yet they will have him sacrifice, and this is sometimes omitted by themselves; neither is manducation, for this is performed by the people as well as the priest when they communicate, and sacrificing does not then belong to them, nor is it ever their

* Docuisse Thomam sacrificium ante fractionem hostiæ esse peractum, sumptionemque spectare proprie ad sacramentum, oblationem vero ad sacrificium. Can. Loc. Theol. l. 12. p. 833.

work, but only the priest's, and yet they then eat and consume the sacrament as well as the priest, so that sacrificing cannot properly lie in this; neither can it be proved that Christ did himself eat when he is supposed to sacrifice; and besides, both this fraction and manducation belong only to the species, they are the only proper subject of those actions; but it is the body and blood of Christ that is sacrificed, and not the species. For this reason therefore, consecration itself cannot well pass for the formal act of sacrificing, for it is the bread is consecrated, not Christ's body; it is the bread only is changed by consecration, that is supposed indeed to be destroyed when it is consecrated, and if this be sacrificing, it is sacrificing of nothing, or at most it is but sacrificing of bread, which is a meaner sacrifice than many of the Jewish: neither is this change of it visible and external, but they will needs have the sacrificing action to be sensible and external, or else the sacrifice will not be so; and if it be only a spiritual and internal and mental offering up of Christ's body and blood to God, this is not proper sacrificing of it again, but only by inward faith and devotion, which we are very willing to allow. But consecration must set Christ's body upon the altar, and put it into the hands of the priest, and then it must be visibly offered to God, and visibly consumed, and this is the true way of sacrificing it; for Bellarmine takes in consumption as necessary together with consecration; the oblation, he owns, is not verbal, neither did Christ thus offer his body and blood at his last supper, but after he had blessed and brake the bread, he gave it to his disciples; but placing this upon the altar by the words of consecration, is a real oblation of it, and then eating and consuming it there formally, constitutes the sacrifice. The Bishop of Meaux in his exposition, seems to make the whole essence of the sacrifice consist in consecration alone, without any manducation or destruction, which Bellarmine makes absolutely necessary; "Christ," he says, "is placed upon the holy table, clothed with those signs that represent his death in virtue of the words of consecration, which are the spiritual sword that makes a mystical separation betwixt the body and the blood." Now if Christ be thus only sacrificed mystically and by representation, he is not sacrificed truly and properly, nor is there any true and proper propitiation made hereby, which is the true state of the controversy between us; Christ may be sacrificed representatively; as Cæsar may be slain in a tragedy, without being really present, and if he were present,

and placed upon the altar, as they will needs have him, yet he is no more sacrificed by the mystical representation, than if Cæsar's picture were stabbed, and he were behind it unhurt. I see no reason why Christ's presence should be necessary to make such a mystical representative or commemorative sacrifice, and if Christ were present, I see not how he is more sacrificed than if he were absent; so that they only confound their thoughts to make a proper sacrifice where there is none; and when they have boasted of a true, proper, visible, external sacrifice, they know not where to find any such thing, and it comes to no more at last than a mere commemorative and representative one, or in plain words, to a sacramental and mystical representation and remembrance of a past sacrifice, which there is neither any need nor any possibility of renewing.

Their differences about the proper sacrificial act, whereby they do with good success destroy one another's notion of it, and so taken together destroy the thing itself, these are the more considerable, because it is not the *res sacrificii* which makes the sacrifice, though that were never so truly present, but the sacrificing act, or the actual sacrificing it; for, as Bellarmine says,* "a sacrifice is an action, not a permanent thing, and it is not the thing itself, but the offering it is properly the sacrifice;" so that, though Christ's natural body and blood were never so much present in the eucharist, even according to the doctrine of transubstantiation itself, yet so long as there is no proper action there to sacrifice it, or no sacrificing act, it would signify nothing to the making it a sacrifice.

3. This doctrine of the mass makes a living body a sacrifice which requires it should be dead, and yet at the same time represents it dead when it supposes it present in a state of life, which is as odd a jumble, as making a man to be by at his own funeral, and at the same time bringing in the person alive, and yet dressing up his picture to remember him dead, and in the habit of death itself. The eucharist is to remember and represent Christ in a state of death, his body and blood as separated from one another, and the one broken, and the other poured out, and the words of consecration are the spiritual sword, as the Bishop of Meaux calls them, that are to do this, and so to constitute the sacrifice; but whilst this is a doing, nay, by the

* Nam non res illa, sed rei illius oblatio proprie est sacrificium, sacrificium enim est actio, non res permanens. Bellarm. de Miss. l. 2. c. 4. D. [ut supra, p. 465. col. 1.]

very doing this thing, the spiritual sword becomes a spiritual word, and raises the same body living, and sets it in that state upon the altar, so that by this means it destroys the sacrifice a great deal more than it made it before, for it makes it be then truly living, whereas it only represented it before as dead. So that it is at the same time a dead representative sacrifice, and a living proper sacrifice, which is in truth no sacrifice at all; for a living sacrifice is just as much sense as a dead animal, that is, it is a contradiction, and one of the terms destroys the other. If a Jewish priest had knocked down the ox with one hand, and raised him up with the other, or restored him to life after he had slew him, this would have made but a very odd sacrifice; and to make Christ dead by the sacramental signs, and to sacrifice him thus in effigy, and to make him alive again under the sacramental signs, and so to sacrifice him truly, this is a strange and unaccountable riddle. I would ask, whether the consecrated species of bread and wine, by "which Christ's blood is shed mystically, and death intervenes only by representation," as the Bishop of Meaux phrases it, whether these would make a real sacrifice without Christ's living body under them? If not, it is not this mystical representation of death makes the sacrifice: or, whether Christ's living body, without those species and signs of his death, would be a sacrifice? If not, then it is not the placing that upon the altar, and so a real oblation of it there that makes the sacrifice; and then what is it that does so? Is it not very odd that the same person must be there seemingly dead, and yet really alive at the same time, to make up this sacrifice?

4. The making it truly propitiatory is a very great error, and inconsistent with itself. All our religious duties, and all our virtuous actions, may in a large and improper sense be said to be propitiatory, as they are said also in Scripture to be sacrifices; for no doubt but they make God kind and propitious to us, and incline him to have mercy upon us; and the blessed eucharist, as it exhibits to us all the graces and benefits which Christ hath by his death purchased for us, whereof pardon and remission of sin, which is hereby sealed to us, is a very great one, so far may be called propitiatory, and it may be instituted for the remission of sin, so far as it is to apply to us the virtue of Christ's body and blood, and make us partakers of his sacrifice upon the cross; but this it may do as it is a sacrament, without being any sacrifice, much less without being a propitiatory one, as the Council of

Trent hath determined it to be “truly propitiatory,”* by the oblation of which God is appeased, and this in opposition to a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.† Now as it is a sacrifice of praise and spiritual devotion, it is no doubt, in the Bishop of Meaux’s words, “acceptable to God, and makes him look upon us with a more propitious eye.”‡ Is this then all the meaning of its being propitiatory? Did ever any Protestant deny it to be thus? And is not this to explain away the true meaning of the word, and to give up the controversy? The true notion of a propitiatory sacrifice is this, “that it suffers a vicarious punishment in another’s stead; that by it the punishment is transferred from the offender to that, and so he is discharged from it, and God is pleased for the sake of that not to be angry, but kind and propitious to him;” this, I think, cannot be denied, and let us see if this will fit to the eucharist: if Christ be really present there, yet does he suffer any punishment there in our stead? Does he pay any price there for our sins? If not, there cannot be any true propitiation then made, nor can the sacrifice be truly propitiatory. Christ died once upon the cross, where he suffered as our *Ἀντίψυχος*, a vicarious punishment for our sins, “by his one oblation of himself once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world;”§ and Bellarmine is forced to own, “that it is the sacrifice of the cross that is properly meritorious and satisfactory, because Christ, when he was then mortal, could merit and satisfy; but the sacrifice of the mass is properly only impetratory, for Christ being now immortal, can neither merit nor sacrifice.”|| Thus truth will out at last, though there be never so much art used to stifle and conceal it, and this is very fairly to give up the question, and surrender the cause; for he owns it is not properly propitiatory, and gives a very good reason for it, “because Christ in his immortal state cannot merit or satisfy,

* Vere propitiatorium esse, hujus quippe oblatione placatus Dominus. Concil. Trident. Sess. 6. [Sess. 22.] c. 2. [Labbe ut supra, vol. 14. p. 853.]

† Si quis dixerit Missæ sacrificium tantum esse laudis et gratiarum actionis—non autem propitiatorium, ib. Can. 3.

‡ Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church, p. 35.

§ Prayer of Consecration in the Communion Service.

|| Nam sacrificium crucis fuit meritorium, satisfactorium et impetratorium vere et proprie, quia Christus tunc mortalis erat, et mereri ac satisfacere poterat, sacrificium Missæ proprie solum est impetratorium, quia Christus nunc immortalis nec mereri nec satisfacere potest. Bellarm. de Miss. l. 2. c. 4. C. [ut supra, p. 464. col. 2.]

or be a true propitiation for us :” the Bishop of Meaux was aware of this, and therefore he makes Christ’s presence upon the altar to be not a propitiation, but a “powerful intercession before God for all mankind, according to the saying of the Apostle, that Jesus Christ presents himself, and appears for us before the face of God, Heb. ix. 24. So that Christ being present upon the holy table under this figure of death, intercedes for us, and represents continually to his Father that death which he hath suffered for his Church.”* But how comes this intercession of Christ to be upon earth? Is it not to be in heaven? And is not Christ there to appear in the presence of God for us? Is not Christ entered into the heavens for that purpose, as the high priest went into the holy of holies with the blood of the great sacrifice of atonement after that was offered upon the altar? Does not the Apostle thus represent that place in allusion, and with relation to that Jewish economy, and could any but Monsieur de Meaux have brought that place to shew, that Christ intercedes for us by being present upon the altar, when the Apostle’s discourse is as directly contrary to that as can be, and makes him to appear only in heaven, or in the presence of God for us, and there present himself and his sacrifice to God, as the Jewish high priest carried the blood of the anniversary sacrifice of expiation into the holy of holies, and there sprinkled it before the mercy-seat? “Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Christ therefore making intercession for us only in heaven, and propitiation only upon the cross, how the sacrifice of the mass should be either intercessory (which is a new way of De Meaux’s), or propitiatory, as the Council of Trent has determined it, I cannot understand. Some of them tell us it is propitiatory only relatively, and by application as it relates and applies to us the propitiatory virtue of the sacrifice of the cross, but this it may do as a sacrament, and then it is not propitiatory in itself, “for sins, for punishments, and for satisfactions,” as the Council declares it, and as propitiatory sacrifices used to be, which were in themselves *Λύτρα*, satisfactory payments and prices for sins, and for the punishments due to them. Bellarmine having owned it not to be properly propitiatory, he says, “When it is called propitiatory or satisfactory, this is to be

* Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church.

understood by reason of the thing which is impetrated by it, for it is said to be propitiatory, because it impetrates remission of sin ; satisfactory, because it impetrates remission of punishment.”* But thus our prayers may be said to be propitiatory, because by them we beg and obtain mercy and pardon at the hands of God ; but a propitiatory sacrifice is to do this not only by way of petition and impetration, but by way of price and payment, and satisfaction ; so that after all, this improper sacrifice of the mass is but very improperly propitiatory, and when they come closely to consider it, they are forced to confess so, and cannot tell how to make out their Council’s doctrine, “ that it is truly propitiatory for sins and for punishments.”

5. Let us consider next how it is impetratory ; if they mean only that it is so upon the account of those prayers which are there made, and which are more efficacious in that solemn office of religion, as the eucharist has relation to the cross, and the sacrifice of Christ upon it, which is the foundation of all our prayers, and by virtue of which we hope to have them heard and answered by God ; so in that solemn, religious, and express memorial of it, we may suppose them to have a greater virtue and efficacy ; if this be all they mean, who will deny it ; and why may not this be without the eucharist’s being a sacrifice ? It is only Christ’s sacrifice and offering upon the cross that gives virtue and power to our prayers at that time when we are devoutly celebrating the remembrance of it, and it is not any offering of him up then, any otherwise than by faith and the inward devotion of our mind, that makes our prayers the more powerful either for ourselves or others.

We are to make prayers and supplications for all men, and for theirs and our own wants and necessities in this solemn and public office of our religion, and so did the first Christians pray then for kings, and all that were in authority, as the Apostle commands, as we find they did at large in St. Cyril,† and the Apostolic Constitutions,‡ and it was in the sacrament they used their litanies or general supplications for all men, and for all things ; as is evident beyond all dispute from those places where they prayed not only for “ the Church and the

* Cum autem dicitur propitiatorium vel satisfactorium, id est intelligendum ratione rei quæ impetratur ; dicitur enim propitiatorium, quia impetrat remissionem culpæ, satisfactorium, quia impetrat remissionem poenæ. Bellarm. de Miss. l. 2. c. 4. C. [ut supra.]

† Catech. Mystag. 5. [p. 327. Venet. 1763.]

‡ L. 8. c. 12. [Labbe, ut supra, vol. 1. p. 481.]

bishops, presbyters and deacons, and all the faithful, but for the king or the emperor where they lived, for the city and all its inhabitants, for the sick, for the captives and banished, for all that travelled by sea or by land," and so for all things, "for the peace of the Church, and for the quiet of the empire, and for all temporal mercies, as well as spiritual, for the fruits of the earth, and for the temperature of the air," and for all things they stood in need of. Now they did not think the eucharist did, as a sacrifice, impetrate all this, or as a real instead of a verbal prayer, as Bellarmine represents it to be;* but they made particular and express prayers for these in the eucharist, and did not think that was to supply the place of prayer, or be a prayer in action, or in dumb signs instead of words, neither did the Primitive Church ever say a mass for to quench fire, or to stay an earthquake, much less to cure the murrain in cattle, or to recover a sheep, or a cow, or horse, when they were sick, as is scandalously and shamefully done by those who ascribe such an impetratory power to it, that it shall do the work in all cases.

6. To make it a sacrifice truly propitiatory in itself, and yet only applicatory of the virtue of another sacrifice, is, if not a contradiction, yet a great absurdity; for if it only apply the virtue and efficacy of another sacrifice, *viz.* that of the cross, which is the only sacrifice of redemption that made true expiation for sin, how can this then be called truly propitiatory, if only that other be propitiatory, and this is but applicatory of that other? A certain *Πανάκεια*, or infallible medicine for all diseases, is given and applied to us by such a vehicle; is the vehicle therefore that applies this, the medicine itself? Or, has that an infallible virtue, because the medicine that is applied by it, has such a virtue? Is laying on a plaster, or applying it to the wound, the same thing with the plaster itself that was made up or compounded long before? If the mass-sacrifice be truly propitiatory, it must be a sacrifice of redemption; if it be only applicatory, and not a sacrifice of redemption in itself, then it is not truly propitiatory. The eucharist, we all say, doth apply to us the sacrifice of the cross, or the benefits of Christ's death, as it is a sacrament; but it is not therefore propitiatory as it is such, nor is it any way necessary it should, and as a sacrifice it cannot be appli-

* *Ipsa enim oblatio tacita quædam sed efficacissima est Invocatio.* Bellarm. de Miss. l. 2. c. 8. B. [ut supra, p. 470. col. 2.]

catory, for it must be offered to God, and therefore as such it could not apply anything to us, for our giving it up, or sacrificing it to God, is quite another thing, and very different from God's giving or applying it to us. God gives Christ's body and blood to us in the eucharist as a sacrament, but as it is a sacrifice we must give it to him, and that would be as strange a way of applying it to ourselves, as a patient returning his physic, or making a present of it to the doctor, would be a new and strange method of taking it himself. And that the priest's intention should apply this, is still as strange; for the priest's intention in the mass is to consecrate and so to sacrifice, and that is giving the thing to God, and not applying it to others; if he gives them the sacrament indeed to eat, then he applies the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood to them; but how he can do this when he does not give it them, but only gives it to God, that is, "sacrifices it," I do not understand. The Jews had the virtue of their sacrifices applied to them by eating of them, or by having the blood sprinkled upon them, or by some such ceremony, to make them partakers of them; but that another sacrifice was offered, or the same sacrifice was reiterated in order to applying of them, is a thing unknown and unheard of. Christ's sacrifice is applied to us by the sacrament of baptism, and therefore that also is called a sacrifice, as it both represents Christ's death, and confers to us the benefits of it: thus Chrysostom expounds that place of Scripture, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," Heb. x. 26, that is, "he can be no more baptized;"* and Bishop Canus says,† "the ancients from hence called baptism a sacrifice;" but figuratively and not properly, and just thus indeed they called the eucharist: Bellarmine was so sensible that this would destroy the notion of the eucharist's being a proper sacrifice, that he absolutely denies "that the Fathers do ever call baptism a sacrifice;"‡ but he is shamefully mistaken, as appears from the confession of Bishop Canus; and because I will not wholly depend upon that, I will produce one or two plain authorities for it out of St. Austin:§ "Every one," says he, "does offer for

* Chrysostom. Homil. 16. in Epist. ad Hebr. [ut supra, p. 186.]

† Hinc illi (Antiqui) baptismum translatitiam hostiam nuncuparunt. Can. Loci commun. l. 2. c. 12. [vol. 3. par. 2. p. 937. Par. 1680.]

‡ Nusquam Patres Baptismum vocant sacrificium, hostiam——Bellarm. de Miss. l. 1. c. 15. [ut supra, p. 441. col. 1.]

§ Holocaustum Dominicæ Passionis eo tempore pro se quisque offert, quo ejusdem Passionis fide dedicatur. August. in Exposit. ad Roman.

himself the sacrifice of Christ's passion, at that time when he is dedicated in the faith of his passion. And the sacrifice of our Lord is in a certain manner offered for every one then, when in his name he is signed by baptism."* Baptism is then called a sacrifice as well as the eucharist, though it is only properly a sacrament, and the sacrifice of Christ is there plainly applied to us without a sacrifice, and so it may be as well in the eucharist.

7. They suppose it to be the same sacrifice with that of the cross, but not to have the same virtue and efficiency, "which," as Bellarmine says, "seems very strange;"† for the Council of Trent declares it "to be one and the same sacrifice with that of the cross, and one and the same offerer," namely Christ by the ministry of the priests, and "to be differing in nothing but in the manner of offering."‡ Now if the manner of offering be not such as makes it a sacrifice, it can be no sacrifice at all; if it be, it can make no difference as to its value and efficacy, for it is not the way of offering, but the worth of the thing offered, that gives value to the sacrifice. The beasts were slain upon an altar, and had their blood spilt there as Christ's was upon the cross, but his being the blood of a person of the greatest dignity, even of the Son of God, this made his sacrifice once offered to be of infinite value and efficacy, and sufficient to propitiate God, and make expiation for all the sins of the world: now if the same sacrifice be as truly offered in the mass, though not after the same manner, and Christ does by the hands of the priest as truly offer himself there as he did upon the cross, why should not this be of as infinite value and efficiency as the other? "But if it were," says Bellarmine, "what need so many masses be offered for the same thing;"§ so many thousand, for example, to get a soul out of purgatory, which if it were not, it would quite spoil the market, and utterly destroy the trade of them; but surely

* *Holocaustum Domini tunc pro unoquoque offertur quodammodo, cum ejus nomine baptizandus signatur. Ib.*

† *Mirum videtur cur valor sacrificii hujus sit finitus, cum idem sit hoc sacrificium cum sacrificio crucis. Bellarm. de Miss. l. 2. c. 4. F. [ut supra, p. 465. col. 1.]*

‡ *Una enim eademque est hostia, idemque offerens sacerdotum ministerio — sola offerendi ratione diversa. Concil. Trid. Sess. 6. [Sess. 22.] c. 2. [Labbe, ut supra, vol. 14. p. 853.]*

§ *Nam si Missæ valor infinitus esset, frustra multæ Missæ præsertim ad rem eandem impetrandam offerrentur. Ib.*

this is but like paying the same full sum of a debt so many times over, when one payment amounts to the whole, and it is but the same that is brought so many times again; it is to be feared that it is not accepted by God, or else it need not be so often tendered, and paid again and again so many several times; but, as Bellarmine says, “both the sacrifice itself, and Christ who then offers it, are infinitely acceptable to God.”* What account then can be given of this? He is the most miserably put to it that ever good guesser was at this unaccountable thing, and “with a salvo to better judgment,”† which is a squeamish piece of modesty that he is seldom guilty of at other times, he offers at three reasons, though he owns the cause of it is not certain.‡ The first is, “in respect of the sacrifice itself which is offered; in the sacrifice of the cross,” says he, “Christ in his very natural being and human form was destroyed, but it is only his sacramental being is so in the eucharist;”§ but Christ, I hope, is as much in his natural being in the eucharist as he was upon the cross, else what becomes of the doctrine of transubstantiation? And he is offered as truly to God in his natural being there; why should not then his natural being be as valuable in the one as in the other? If his natural being not being destroyed there makes it to be no true sacrifice, as one would think he had it here in his thoughts, then indeed he gives a good and a true reason why the one is not a sacrifice, nor upon that account so valuable as the other; but for fear of that he quits this reason and goes to the next, which is,|| “in respect of the offerer, because in the one the offerer is the very person of the Son of God by himself, but in the other the offerer is the Son of God by his minister;” but surely if the oblation be the same, of the same worth and value, the offerer will by no means lessen and diminish it, and how often do they tell us that Christ himself is the offerer of the sacrifice of the mass, when we charge them with the great boldness and presumption of hav-

* *Ipsa hostia et offerens Christus infinito modo sunt Deo grata. Ib.*

† *Videntur mihi, salvo meliori iudicio, tres esse causæ hujus rei. Bellarm. de Miss. l. 2. c. 4. F. [Ibid.]*

‡ *Causa non est adeo certa. Ib.*

§ *Prima sumitur ex parte hostiæ quæ offertur; nam in sacrificio destruebatur ad honorem Dei ipsum esse naturale Christi in forma humana; in sacrificio Missæ destruitur tantum esse sacramentale. Ib.*

|| *Secunda sumitur ex parte offerentis: nam in sacrificio crucis offerens est ipsa persona filii Dei per se; at in sacrificio Missæ offerens est filius Dei per ministrum. Ib.*

ing a mortal man offer up Christ, and so consequently purchase our redemption, and make propitiation for sin, which none but Christ can do. To avoid this, the Bishop of Meaux says, "that Christ being present upon the table, offers up himself to God for us in the eucharist."* So that the priest has only to set him upon the table, according to him, by the words of consecration, and then Christ offers up himself to God, "and Christ being present upon the holy table under this figure of death, intercedes for us, and represents continually to his Father that death which he has suffered for his Church."† And the Council of Trent says, "It is the same offerer as well as the same sacrifice that was upon the cross, and the difference between that and the sacrifice of the mass is not at all upon the account of the offerer, but only the manner of offering."‡ This therefore can be no true reason of the different value of the two sacrifices and oblations.

The third is taken from the will of Christ; for though Christ § "could by one oblation offered either by himself or his minister obtain any thing or for any person, yet he would not otherwise desire or impetrate this, but only that in every oblation a certain measure of the fruit of his passion be applied either to remission of sin, or to other benefits which we want in this life." But where does this will of Christ appear? Christ may dispose of his merits and the fruits of his passion as he pleaseth; but how do they know that he intends thus to parcel them out, and to distribute them in such small measures and scantlings as they think fit, and as serves only for their purpose? If the sacrifices and oblations be the same, it ought to be without doubt of the same infinite value with that upon the cross; and though it be very bold and precarious to guess at Christ's will without some declaration of it from himself, yet I cannot see how it was possible that it should be Christ's will to have it the same sacrifice, and yet not have the same virtue; which is as if a physician should have an universal medicine, that by once taking would certainly cure all diseases

* Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church.

† Ib.

‡ Una eademque hostia idemque offerens, sola offerendi ratione diversa. Concil. Trid. Sess. 6. [Sess. 22] c. 2. [Labbe, ut supra, vol. 14. p. 853.]

§ Tertia ratio sumitur ex ipsa Christi voluntate; nam etiamsi possit Christus per unam oblationem sacrificii incruenti sive per se, sive per ministrum oblatis, quælibet a Deo et pro quibuscunque impetrare, tamen noluit petere nec impetrare, nisi ut pro singulis oblationibus applicetur certa mensura fructus passionis suæ, sive ad peccati remissionem, sive ad alia beneficia, quibus in hac vita indigemus. Bellar. de Miss. l. 2. c. 4. H. [ut supra, p. 465. col. 2.]

whatever, and yet should for some reasons so order the matter that the very same medicine should, if he pleased, have only a limited virtue, and cure but one disease at a time, or only some lesser and smaller illnesses, and that even for those it must be often taken ; this would certainly bring a suspicion either upon his medicine or himself, and nobody but would doubt, either that it had not such a virtue in it at first, or that it was not the same afterwards, nor made truly by him as he pretended.

8. They make the priest in the mass-sacrifice to do all in the name of Christ, and to act as his agent and deputy ; and so they say it is the same priest who offers, as well as the same sacrifice which was offered upon the cross, and that he pronounces the words of consecration, " This is my body," in Christ's name, not by an historical reciting of them, but as speaking authoritatively in the person of Christ himself, and that this makes the sacrifice great and valuable, as it is thus offered to God by Christ himself. I ask, then, whether all the sacrificial acts in the mass are performed by Christ ? Does Christ consecrate his own body ? For consecration is the most principal part of the sacrificing action, if not the whole of it ; or if, as some think, the consumption of the sacrifice is the great thing that makes it perfect and consummate, I ask whether Christ does then eat his own body every mass, when it is eaten by the priest ? If, as Bellarmine owns, the consumption of the sacrifice be absolutely necessary to make a sacrificial oblation, and the true offerer be Christ himself, as the Council of Trent says, then Christ himself must consume the sacrifice, that is, he must eat his own body. Bellarmine is really pinched with this difficulty, and he hath so wisely managed the matter, that as he brought himself into this strait, so he knows not how to get out of it, but he is forced to confess* that " Christ may in some sense be said to consume the sacrament," *i. e.* himself ; for it is Christ's body and blood is the sacrament, and not the species, at least not without those. We always thought it a prodigious, if not a horrid thing, for another to consume Christ's real body ; but now for Christ himself to be made to do this is to expose, Christ shall I say ? or themselves ? or that cause which is driven to these absurdities, and which can never avoid them

* Tamen ipse dici potest consumere sacramentum. Bellarm. de Miss. l. 1. c. 27. [Ibid. p. 458. col. 2.]

whilst it makes the mass a true sacrifice, and Christ himself the offerer of it.

9. The offering this sacrifice to redeem souls out of purgatory, as it is made one of the greatest ends and uses of this sacrifice of the mass, so is one of the greatest errors and abuses that belong to it; for besides that it contains in it all the foregoing errors and absurdities of its being a proper sacrifice, and so benefiting those who do not at all receive it as a sacrament, and being properly propitiatory, at least for lesser sins, and for the temporal pains that they suppose due to greater sins after they are forgiven, which is another cluster of errors that grows likewise to this doctrine, though it belongs to another place to consider them. I say, besides all those errors, it takes in also the groundless, and uncomfortable, and erroneous opinion of purgatory, whereby a great many departed souls are supposed to be in a sad state of extreme pain and torment, till they are delivered from it by these masses and sacrifices which are offered for them to that purpose. And this is indeed the great advantage of them, I mean to the priests that offer them, who hereby make merchandize not only of the souls of men, but of Christ's body and blood, and are made by this sacrifice a sort of money-changers in the temple, and instead of doves sell Christ himself, and the souls in purgatory are redeemed out of it by such corruptible things as silver and gold, which are to purchase masses, that is Christ's body and blood, at a certain price. This is a most horrible abuse of Christianity, which exposes it to infinite scandal and reproach. The selling of masses and indulgences is so visible a blot in Popery, that though nothing has more enriched, yet nothing has more shamed it than these have done: both those have relation to purgatory, which is an unknown country in the other world, that hath given rise to those two profitable trades, and to all that spiritual traffic that is carried on by it. A late excellent discourse has so fully considered that subject, that I am no further to meddle with it here than as the sacrifice of the mass is concerned in it. Our adversaries' most plausible and specious pretence for both those doctrines is taken from the ancient custom of oblations for the dead, which cannot be denied to be of great antiquity and general use, even very near the beginnings of Christianity, and to have had a long continuance in the Christian Church. Tertullian mentions them as "made on

every anniversary of their birth,"* *i. e.* on the day wherein they died to this world, and were born into immortality. St. Cyprian speaks of them as so generally used for all persons, that it was made the punishment of him who should leave a clergyman his executor, and so take him off from his sacred employment to secular troubles and affairs, that† "no offering should be made for him, neither should any sacrifice be celebrated for his departure;‡ and this was an order," he says, "made by former bishops in council;" and therefore he commands that Geminus Victor, who had made Geminus Faustinus tutor to his will, or his executor,§ "should have no oblation made for his departure, nor any prayer used in his name in the Church." St. Austin gives it in as the custom of the universal Church in his time, "that a sacrifice was offered for the dead;|| and this," he says, "is sufficient authority for it, though there were nothing of it in Scripture;" and having shewn, that what happens to the dead body is of no concern to the departed soul,¶ "none of our care," says he, "can reach the dead, but only that we supplicate for them by the sacrifices of the altar, of prayers, or of alms;" and the same thing he mentions in several other places of his works, and in his own oblations at the altar for his mother Monica after she was dead. Now what can we think of these oblations unless, with the Papists, we allow such a state of departed souls as they call purgatory, that is, neither heaven nor hell; for if they were either in the one or the other of those, these oblations would signify nothing to them, and how plain is it that they thought them to be some way benefited or relieved by

* Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis annua die facimus. Tertul. de Corona Militis, c. 3. [ut supra, p. 102.]

† At si quis hoc fecisset, non offerretur pro eo, nec sacrificium pro dormitione ejus celebraretur. Cyprian. Epist. l. 1. Edit. Oxon. [Epist. 66. p. 246. Venet. 1738.]

‡ Episcopi antecessores nostri religiose considerantes et salubriter providentes, censuerunt nequis frater excedens ad tutelam vel curam clericum nominaret, &c. Ib. Contra formam nuper in Concilio a sacerdotibus datam.

§ Non est quod pro dormitione ejus apud vos fiat oblatio, aut deprecatio aliqua nomine ejus in Ecclesia frequentetur. Ib. [p. 247.]

|| Non parva est Ecclesiæ universæ quæ in hac consuetudine claret, autoritas —, si nunquam in Scripturis veteribus scriptum legeretur — sc. oblatum pro mortuis sacrificium. August. Cura pro mortuis. [vol. 6. p. 516. Par. 1685.]

¶ Non existimemus ad mortuos pro quibus curam gerimus pervenire, nisi quod pro eis sive altaris, sive orationum, sive eleemosynarum sacrificiis solenniter supplicamus. ibid. versus finem. [Ibid. p. 530.]

the sacrifice of the mass or altar? I answer, that neither of those opinions, as they are now held and received in the Church of Rome, do follow from the primitive custom of offering for the dead, but that they were of another nature than what they account them; and this I shall evince from the following considerations.

1. Then, these oblations were made for departed souls who were not supposed to be in a state of pain, as they now believe purgatory to be, but in a state of ease and happiness, as St. Austin believed his mother to be when he offered for her, and when he prayed for her * he did believe that God had already granted her what he prayed for, but he begged him to accept these free-will offerings of his mouth. It was not then a doubt of her state, but only the voluntary expressions of his love and duty which he designed by his prayers and oblations for her, and those oblations were made even for saints and martyrs, and the most holy Christians, of whose future happiness there was no manner of question, and for all indeed who died in the communion of the Church. And therefore,

2. They were an honorary testimony given to them of their good state, and of their dying in the peace and communion of the Church: to have their names recited at the altar-service out of the diptychs, or folded tables, was an honorary memorial and mention of them, as members of the Church, and it was a disowning them as such, to expunge or blot their names out of those diptychs; and so the making or receiving oblations for them at the altar, was an acknowledgment of their right to the altar, and to the Christian communion; and therefore no oblations were received of the ἀδεκτοὶ and ἀκοινωνήτοιοι of those who were not communicants, or had not a right to communion, of those who were guilty of scandalous sins, or of those who were in a state of penance for them, as may be seen in the Apostolic Constitutions,† and in one of the most ancient Councils,‡ which forbids the bishop to take oblations from him who does not communicate. Petavius has largely made this out in his notes on Epiphanius,§ and pro-

* Et credo quod jam feceris quod te rogo, sed voluntaria oris mei approba, Domine. August. Confess. l. 9. c. 12. [c. 13.] [vol. 1. p. 170. Par. 1679.]

† L. 4. c. 5. l. 3. c. 8.

‡ Episcopus placuit, ab eo qui non communicat, munera accipere non debere. Concil. Eliber. c. 28. [Labbe, ut supra, vol. 1. p. 973.]

§ Animadvers. in Epiphan. Exposit. Fid. [vol. 2. Append. p. 351. Colon. 1682.]

duces a Council which provides,* “that the oblations of those penitents should be received, who were surprised by a sudden death in a journey;” which was a receiving them into the Church’s communion, *quasi ex postliminio*.

3. By having these oblations received and offered for them, they were made partakers of the prayers that were made for them at the altar: whatever benefit these prayers were believed to be of to departed souls, which I am not here to examine, that did accrue to them by having these oblations made and received for them; for by this means they were particularly mentioned and recommended in the prayers at the altar; and thus both Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and St. Austin explain the sacrifices and oblations which they mention as made for the dead:† “The wife prays for her husband’s soul, and offers on his anniversary.” And again,‡ “He deserves not to be named in the prayer of the priests at the altar of God, who takes off God’s ministers from the altar,” in the forementioned case of making a clergyman executor.§ And in the prayers of the priest which are poured out to God at his altar, the commendation of the dead has place. So that the good they had by these oblations, was upon the account of these prayers, and not by any virtue in these oblations as they were a sacrifice, distinct from the benefit of the prayers; as they were alms indeed together with prayers, they thought the dead benefited by them together with the prayers; and so St. Austin, in the fore-quoted place, mentions the sacrifices of the altar, which he explains by prayers and alms, both which he calls sacrifices,|| but not in a proper and strict sense, as our adversaries must acknowledge. For these sacrifices, I hope, were not true and proper ones, such as the sacrifice of the mass is held to be, nor were they properly propitiatory for their sins, nor did

* Concil. Vasense. ib.

† Uxor pro anima Defuncti mariti orat et offert annuis diebus dormitionis ejus. Tertul. de Monogam. [c. 10. p. 531. Par. 1695.]

‡ Neque enim ad altare meretur nominari in sacerdotum prece, qui ab altari sacerdotes et ministros suos advocari voluit. Cypr. Epist. 1. [ut supra, p. 246.]

§ Ubi in precibus sacerdotis quæ Domino Deo ad ejus altare funduntur, locum suum habet etiam commendatio mortuorum. August. Cura pro mortuis. [ut supra, vol 6. p. 517.]

|| Sive Altaris, sive orationum, sive eleemosynarum sacrificiis supplicamus. Ut supra. [p. 530.]

the ancients who prayed for the dead at the altar, and made oblations for them, think that these oblations were properly propitiatory or satisfactory for their sins, as the Church of Rome believes the sacrifice of the mass now to be : there is nothing that amounts to this in any of those places where they speak of offerings for the dead ; nor would St. Cyprian, or the bishops who ordained in Council that no offerings should be made for him who appointed a clergyman executor to his will, have inflicted so severe a punishment upon so small a fault, had they thought this would have deprived his soul of a true and real propitiation for his sins, nor would blotting out of the diptychs have been so commonly put in use, had this been consigning the soul to the punishments of another world.

There was therefore no such thing meant as our adversaries would now draw from that ancient custom of oblations for the dead ; and yet that this quickly degenerated into superstition, and has been farther improved in aftertimes, and is now come to very great perfection in the Roman Church, we willingly own ; and that the first beginnings of this were laid in this unscriptural custom, as the worship of saints was from the anniversary memory of the martyrs, is not to be denied : but corruption in religion, like diseases in the body, might proceed at first from very small causes, but by neglect and carelessness grow oftentimes very great and dangerous, especially when the physicians that should have cured them, thought it for their purpose and interest rather to heighten and increase them.

10. The sacrifice of the mass must either be unnecessary, or else must reflect on the sacrifice of the cross : if it be not necessary for obtaining the pardon and remission of any sin, or for the relief of any spiritual want and necessity, for which there has been no provision made by the sacrifice of the cross, then it is wholly useless and unprofitable ; if it be necessary for any such purpose, then the sacrifice of the cross is not perfect and sufficient for all those ends, but requires this sacrifice of the mass to make up what is lacking and behind of the sufferings of Christ upon the cross, which is a great diminution to the infinite value of them. It is impossible to avoid these inconveniencies ; for if the merit of the cross be so great as to expiate all manner of sin, and to take away all kinds of punishment that are due to it, and to supply all the spiritual wants and necessities whatever of all Christians, then what

possible need can there be of any other sacrifice? And if Christ's sacrifice once offered upon the cross can do all this, why should there be any new offering, or any reiteration of the same sacrifice, when by being once offered, it hath done the whole business that it can do, were it offered never so often: but if there be any kind of sins, which because they are daily committed by us, therefore require a daily sacrifice, as they pretend, to be offered for them, which implies that the constant and abiding virtue of the cross cannot reach them, which is yet as efficacious to all Christians now as the first day it was offered, or as it could be if it were offered every day by Christ himself; or if there be any such temporal remains of punishment after the eternal guilt of them is pardoned, which are not discharged by Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, but there is this small handwriting still however against us, and continues uncanceled, notwithstanding the death of Christ; then we are not perfectly redeemed from all punishment, and from the whole curse of the law by the sacrifice of the cross, but there is something more necessary to deliver and save us, if not from hell, yet from purgatory; and whatever Christ has done for us, yet the mass-sacrifice must still help us, not as an instrument of religion to work upon us and make us better, but as a sacrifice to God, to prevail with him to free us from punishment, or else we are in a miserable condition; which is the true contrivance of the sacrifice of the mass, that necessarily renders it very injurious to the most perfect and sufficient sacrifice of the cross.

I might add many other errors belonging to this doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, such as saying their masses in an unknown tongue, putting confidence in the mere *opus operatum*, offering up masses to the honour of the saints, and the like; but those do more properly fall under other heads of controversy, and are the peculiar subjects of other treatises that are written on purpose upon those matters; for though these all run into this doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, which is the great lake into which most of the Popish errors empty themselves, yet the first head and rise of them is not from hence, and so I shall not take them in here.

The mass-sacrifice contains in it a whole legion of errors, but it is only the principal one which I have endeavoured by this discourse to cast out, and that is, its being a proper and truly propitiatory sacrifice, which I have shewn to be founded

upon two monstrous errors, to have no true foundation in Scripture, nor no just claim to antiquity, but to be plainly contrary to both these, and to be in itself very absurd and unreasonable; which is enough in conscience against any one doctrine, or any Church that maintains it, however infallible they may both of them pretend to be, if this be clearly and strongly made out against them, as has been attempted in this treatise.

THE TEXTS EXAMINED WHICH PAPISTS CITE OUT OF
THE BIBLE, FOR THE PROOF OF THEIR DOCTRINE OF
THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

PART I.

It is my intention, in the following discourse, to consider those passages of the holy Scripture which are, by the writers of the Church of Rome, produced in defence of the doctrine of that Church concerning the Sacrifice of the Mass. And before I proceed to that, it will be fit that I should state the question between that Church and ours, and briefly shew what the Church of Rome holds, what we allow, and for what reason we reject the doctrine of the Church of Rome in that matter.

By the Mass in this question, Bellarmine* owns, is meant the whole celebration of the divine service in which the eucharist was consecrated.

By Sacrifice is meant a proper one, and such as is propitiatory: "Not a sacrifice in general," says a late author of the Church of Rome,† "or improperly so termed (such as are all the actions of the mind, or any work of virtue whatsoever), but a special sacrifice truly and properly so called." The same author adds presently afterwards: "Our tenet is, that the oblation of our Lord's last Supper, or the mass, is a true and proper, unbloody sacrifice, and propitiatory for sins."

The Council of Trent‡ defines it to be "a true and proper sacrifice and propitiatory;" and that it is not only profitable to him who receives it, but to be offered up for the living and the dead; and that in this sacrifice of the mass the "very same Christ is contained, and unbloodily sacrificed, who once on the altar of the cross offered himself bloodily."

The Trent Catechism§ tells us, that the sacrifice of the mass is not only a sacrifice of praise, or bare commemoration of the

* Bellarm. de Missa, l. 1. c. 1. [vol. 3. p. 412. col. 1. Par. 1721]

† Manual of Controversies, by H. T. Printed at Douay, 1654.

‡ Sess. 22. [c. 2. Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 853. Lut. Par. 1672.]

§ Catechism Roman. p. 206. edit. Antwerp. 1583.

sacrifice of the cross, but “truly a propitiatory sacrifice by which God is appeased and rendered propitious to us.” And a little before,* speaking of the causes for which the eucharist was instituted by Christ, this is assigned as one, *viz.* “that the Church might have a perpetual sacrifice, by which our sins might be expiated; and our heavenly Father being often greatly offended with our sins, might be brought from anger to mercy, and from the severity of a just punishment to clemency.” The same author tells us a little before, that “if the sacrifices of the old law were pleasing to God, what may be hoped from that sacrifice (*viz.* of the mass) in which he himself is sacrificed and offered up, of whom was twice heard the voice from heaven, ‘This is my beloved Son?’ ” &c.

That author, in another place,† in answer to the question “whether the sacrifice of the mass be the same sacrifice with that of the cross,” replies thus: “We confess it,” says he, “to be one and the same sacrifice, and so to be accounted,” &c.

Upon the whole, the Church of Rome in this matter affirms these three things:—

First, That the sacrifice of the last supper, or (as they commonly express it) the sacrifice of the mass, is a true and proper sacrifice.

Secondly, That the victim which is sacrificed in this sacrifice of the last supper, or mass, is the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. For they affirm this to be the same sacrifice with that of the cross.

Thirdly, That this sacrifice of the mass is propitiatory and expiatory; that it procures pardon for the sins of the living and dead, as well as obtains grace to help in the time of need.

This is a sincere and true representation of the doctrine of the Church of Rome in this matter.

And here I cannot but take notice of the insincere practice of a late writer,‡ who pretends to give us a true representation of the doctrines of the Church of Rome. He, in his discourse of the mass, craftily baulks what the Church of Rome teaches in this matter, *viz.* that it is a proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and dead, which is the main point contested between us; and instead of that, tells us “that it is a commemorative sacrifice, lively representing, in an unbloody

* Page 203.

† Page 105.

‡ A Papist misrepresented and represented, by J. L. p. 52, &c.

manner, the bloody sacrifice which was offered for us upon the cross ;” and that Christ gave in command to his Apostles to do the same thing he had done at his last supper, in commemoration of him. He says not one word of its being a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. He calls it a commemorative one ; which, taking in the whole action, we do not deny. And when he affirms that Christ bid his Apostles to do what he did in commemoration of him, we say so too ; but this author could not but know, that in the third canon of the Council of Trent concerning this matter, an anathema is denounced against those who affirm the sacrifice of the mass to be a bare commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross.

We of this Church of England do readily grant and allow,

That the eucharist may be called a sacrifice, as a sacrament hath the name of that which it does commemorate and represent.

That as in this sacrament we commemorate the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, so we do in it represent to God the Father what Christ suffered for us, that he may graciously incline to bestow on us the blessings which Christ hath purchased with his blood.

That we do, when we communicate, make an oblation of ourselves. Thus in the prayer after the communion we read : “ Here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee.”

That the eucharist may be called a sacrifice of praise. We do therein offer our praises and thanksgivings to God ; and as a testimony of the sense we have of the Divine mercies, we offer our alms, which is not only a sacrifice, but such an one as with which God is well pleased.

What our Church holds is best learned from her declaration in her Articles, in the following words : * “ The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual : and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone.” And in the next words she declares against the “ sacrifices of masses, in which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt.” Whence it is evident, that she rejects the doctrine of the Trent Council, that the sacrifice of

* Article 3.

the mass is a true and proper sacrifice, propitiatory for the quick and dead.

This we deny ; and think we have just reason so to do. And that no such doctrine is revealed in the holy Scripture, as will appear afterwards, is reason enough for the rejecting it. Such a doctrine as this had need be clearly proved by some express testimony or just consequence. This is needful according to one of their own writers.*

But though this be reason enough, yet this is not all. The doctrine itself is perplexed and inconsistent, and by no means allowable. And for this I appeal to the conscience of any indifferent man, that will but suffer himself to weigh and consider things. I would fain know how that can be said to be an unbloody sacrifice by them who hold that the natural blood of Christ is there? How can that be called a commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross which is affirmed to be one and the very same sacrifice with it? How can the sacrifice of the mass be the same with that of the cross, when Christ's natural death is of the essence of the sacrifice of the cross ; but that of the mass does not comprehend his death ; and we are told, Rom. vi. 9, that "Christ dieth no more?" How can that be said to be a true and proper sacrifice where the essentials of such a sacrifice, even according to our adversaries, are wanting? Here is nothing visible or sensible, which yet is that which Bellarmine † requires in his definition of a true and proper sacrifice. It is easy to affirm indeed, that the body of Christ is in the sacrifice of the mass, under the species of bread ; but as this can never be proved, so it is impertinent to allege it in this place. For where is that which is visible or sensible, which Bellarmine requires the victim should be in a proper sacrifice? The species of bread is so far from rendering the body of Christ visible or sensible, that it hides it from our eyes. And though a substance may be known by its own accidents, yet it cannot be known by the accidents of another substance. Who can tell the difference, that looks on them only, between a consecrated and unconsecrated wafer? Again, in this sacrifice of the mass, here is no destruction, no sensible transmutation of what is sacrificed ; which Bellarmine makes necessary in a true and proper sacrifice : here is no destruction

* Quæ enim ad fidem et dogmata constituenda pertinent, ea clarissime oportet ex Scripturis S. colligi. Richerii Apolog. pro Gersonio.

† Bellarm. de Missa, l. 1. c. 2. [ut supra, p. 415. col. 1.]

of any thing that can be perceived : no shedding of blood (for it is an unbloody sacrifice) without which there is no remission. The natural body of Christ receives no change, his natural being is not destroyed or damaged. If they say, "that it is his sacramental being that receives the change," they must mean either an accidental being (as present in the sacrament) or substantial. The latter they cannot mean, unless they allow of the destruction or transmutation of his natural being, which they will not allow. If the former, then the sacrifice of the mass is a sacrifice of accidents only, and not of Christ ; and then this sacrifice of the mass is not the same with that of the cross. And it is very strange that should be a true and proper sacrifice,* in which death only intervenes by representation ; and that it should be the very same with that of the cross, when we are told, that it is instituted only to represent it ; as if there were no difference between a memorial and representation, and the thing to which this does refer. In other proper sacrifices, the altar sanctified the victim, and was reputed of greater value, and the offerer was of greater price than what was offered : this will not be allowed in the present case, and yet we must be obliged to believe it to be a proper sacrifice. We cannot understand how the sacrifice of the mass should be the very same with that of the cross, when one is but the memorial of the other, and is acknowledged to receive all its virtue from it. It cannot be that they should be the same, either in number, or in kind. The first is so absurd, that no man can affirm it ; nor can any man believe the second, that considers the wide difference between the one and the other, *viz.* between the sacrifice of the cross, and that of the mass. The first was offered by Christ, and was a bloody sacrifice ; it was offered on the cross, and is the full price of our redemption : Christ was the victim, and was offered there in his natural substance ; he was visible there, and there he died. But this sacrifice of the mass is offered by priests, is an unbloody sacrifice, is placed on altars erected for that purpose, and is not so much as pretended to be the price of our redemption. We see nothing but bread and wine, we taste and handle nothing else ; and it is confessed that Christ dies no more, and yet we are obliged to believe that both these are one and the very same.

Our Church hath further reason still to reject this doctrine

* Bishop of Condom's Exposition, S. 14.

of the sacrifice of the mass, because it is contrary to the doctrine of the holy Scriptures. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews had the fairest occasion to acquaint us with this Romish doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, had there been any such thing: for he discourseth at large of the priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek and of Aaron; of the insufficiency of the Jewish sacrifices, and of the sufficiency of the sacrifice of the cross; and yet he is so far from once mentioning the sacrifice of the mass, that he says many things which overthrow it.

He tells us, Heb. ix. 12: "Christ by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." If he obtained eternal redemption, he need not be offered daily to procure our pardon. There was no need he should offer himself more than once. The same divine author tells us so. "Not yet," says he, verse 25, 26, "that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others (for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world), but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The repetition of the legal sacrifices spake their insufficiency: our Saviour, "by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14. This speaks the sufficiency of the sacrifice of the cross. Two things we learn from the reasoning of this divine author, which overthrow the sacrifice of the mass.

First, That Christ cannot be offered without suffering; and therefore if he be offered in the mass, he must suffer there: he must either suffer in the mass, or not be offered there. For if he should offer himself often, says this divine author, "then must he often have suffered." And if the sacrifice of the mass be a sacrifice properly so called, and propitiatory, the oblation of Christ in it must infer his suffering.

Secondly, That the same consideration is to be had of the time from the beginning of the world to the death of Christ, as of the time of his death to the end of it. If he must be often offered after his death upon the cross to the end of the world, he must for the same reason have been often offered from the beginning of the world to his death: but there was no need he should have been often offered before his death, and therefore no need of it afterwards, neither to procure our redemption, nor yet to apply it. If he saved them who went before by this one offering, why not them that are to

come? "He was once offered to bear the sins of many," Heb. ix. 28. And but once, as appears from what goes before: "And as it is appointed to men once to die, &c. so Christ was once offered," &c. The same divine author tells, "That Christ offered one sacrifice for sins," and that "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," and "that there is no more offering for sin," Heb. x. 12, 18.

I proceed next to consider the Scriptures produced by those of the Church of Rome in defence of the sacrifice of the mass.

The first place of Scripture which I shall consider, is what we read of Melchizedek, who is said to have brought forth bread and wine: "and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him," *i. e.* Abram, &c. Gen. xiv. 18, 19. This place of Scripture is commonly urged by the Church of Rome, as an argument to prove their doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass. And Bellarmine* takes great pains to prove it from thence. And indeed it requires great labour to form any show of an argument for the sacrifice of the mass from these words. However, I shall follow the Cardinal, and consider his reasoning from these words.

That the Psalmist, Psal. cx. 4, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb. vii. affirm Christ to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek, we grant; and that he was not a priest after the order of Aaron.

The Cardinal proceeds, and tells us, there were two differences between these two priesthoods, from whence he thinks two arguments may be drawn for the support of his cause. The first and chief difference he reckons, is the external form of the sacrifices. The Aaronical were bloody, that of Melchizedek unbloody, and figured, under the species of bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ. Hence the Cardinal concludes, that if Christ be a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and not of Aaron, he must institute an unbloody sacrifice, and that under the species of bread and wine. This he thinks follows necessarily from the force of the type and figure. Melchizedek offered bread and wine, and truly sacrificed; therefore Christ, in the institution of the eucharist, did truly sacrifice, otherwise he had not fulfilled the type.

The second difference between the priesthood of Melchizedek and Aaron, the Cardinal says, is this, that the first was

* De Missa, l. 1. c. 6. [ut supra, p. 418. &c.]

that of one man, who had neither predecessor nor successor ; of which order Christ was, who lives for ever ; but that of Aaron was of many men, succeeding each other, because of death. If Christ then be a priest for ever, the rite of sacrificing must continue ; and therefore there must be another sacrifice, besides that of the cross once offered, which must be continually offered. For he cannot be said to be a priest who hath no sacrifice which he may offer. But there can be no such, if we destroy the sacrifice of the mass.

That I may give a clear answer to these pretences, for I cannot call them arguments, I shall proceed in the method of learned Protestant writer * on this argument.

I. I shall shew that we have no sufficient ground to believe that Melchizedek did offer an unbloody sacrifice of bread and wine.

II. That if he had offered such a sacrifice, it will not thence follow, that the priesthood of Melchizedek consisted in this, and that this distinguished it from that of Aaron.

III. That granting that Melchizedek did offer such a sacrifice, and that thereby his priesthood was different from that of Aaron, it does not thence follow that Christ ought to institute in his Church an unbloody sacrifice under the species of bread and wine.

I. We have no sufficient ground to believe that Melchizedek did offer an unbloody sacrifice of bread and wine.

The text alleged gives no manner of ground for this opinion ; there is not in it the least syllable to this purpose. “Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine.” It is not said, “he offered,” much less that he offered to God, which he must have done had he offered a sacrifice. He brought forth this as a refreshment to Abram and his company. This is all that the text imports. There is nothing in the Hebrew, or LXXII. interpreters, in the Targum of Onkelos, in the Syriac version, nor the ancient Latin version, which favours this opinion of the Roman Church. Josephus,† relating this matter, tells us expressly, that Melchizedek entertained Abram’s army, and afforded them plenty of necessary provisions.‡ But he says

* De la Place, Examen des Preuves de Sacrifice de la Messe, p. 26.

† Josephus Ant. l. 1. c. 11. [vol. 1. p. 32. Amstel. &c. 1726.]

‡ *Ξένια καὶ πολλὴν ἀφθονίαν τῶν ἐπιτηδείων*, &c. [Ibid.]

nothing of his sacrificing bread and wine. And Philo the Jew* reckons this action of Melchizedek as an instance of his hospitality, and opposeth it to the churlishness of the Moabites and Ammonites, who refused to give refreshment to the Israelites in their passage to the promised land. The case is so plain, that several of the Roman Church do not think these words to import any sacrifice. Cardinal Cajetan† upon the words affirms, “that here is nothing written of sacrifice or oblation, but only of bringing forth, which,” says he, “Josephus affirms to have been done for the refreshment of the conquerors.” Another of their own Church‡ gives this account of it, “Melchizedec actis Deo ob victoriam gratiis, ac fausta omnia Abramo precatus, ipsum ejusque exercitum cibo potuque refocillavit.” So that all that he affirms is, that Melchizedek refreshed Abraham and his followers with meat and drink, having given God thanks for the victory, and wished all happiness to Abraham.

But Bellarmine pretends that the Hebrew word, *קָרַבַּן* which we render ‘brought forth,’ according to the exigence of the place, is often used for the bringing forth of a sacrifice to be slain: and as a proof of this, he allegeth a passage from Judges, chap. vi. 18, which I find alleged by others of that Church,§ as referring to a sacrifice. The notes upon the Douay Bible|| go farther, and say, that this Hebrew word is a word pertaining to sacrifice, as in Judges, chap. vi. 18, 19.

Now though it be nothing to the purpose, if this word should be applicable to a sacrifice as well as to any other thing, which may be said to be brought forth, yet I shall consider the place produced to prove this to be a word pertaining to a sacrifice. And it will quickly appear that these gentlemen are very unlucky in the choice of their place. Gideon requests of the person sent to him, that he might bring forth his present and set it before him, Judges vi. 18. He offers a refreshment, but here is no mention of any sacrifice; it is spoken of a meal, not of a sacrifice; and this will appear by the context. Gideon was no priest and therefore might not sacrifice, he being of another tribe, ver. 15; nor is it to be imagined he

* Philo Judæus Leg. Allegor. l. 2.

† Nihil scribitur hic de Sacrificio, &c. Cajetan. in Gen. xiv. 18.

‡ Cassander de viris illustribus. De Abrahamo.

§ Vid. Bonfrer. in Gen. xiv. 18.

|| Vid. Douay Bible, with Annotations on Gen. xiv. 12. Printed 1635.

would sacrifice to a man, as he took him for (ver. 22) at that time: to say that Gideon brought to this person that he might sacrifice, is without all ground, and will oblige him that affirms it to prove that he took him for a priest. Besides, Gideon did not bring forth his kid alive, he did not sprinkle the blood, or offer the fat upon the altar as a sacrifice, but he "went in and made ready the kid: he put the flesh in a basket, and the broth in a pot," ver. 19. These are things not agreeable to a sacrifice, and altogether inconsistent with the laws of a *mincha* or meat-offering, as we render that word when it signifies a sacrifice; for that offering, it was expressly required that it should be offered by the sons of Aaron, Levit. vi. 14, and at the altar. Here are abundant proofs of no sacrifice. Indeed the vulgar Latin chanced to render what we render *present*, by *sacrificium*; and the word sometimes signifies so; but as the Syriac renders it by meal or refreshment, so it is infinitely plain from what has been said above, that here is no mention of a sacrifice. It is very well known, that the Hebrew word which we render 'present,'* is a word, that when it is considered apart from its signification of a sacrifice or holy oblation, signifies a gift or present, and is so interpreted by the LXXII. And our English have well rendered the word in this place, though they have not concealed the other signification of it in their marginal reading.

For what Bellarmine adds, "That there was no need that Melchizedek should give Abram any refreshment, because he returned with great spoils, and those who followed him had eaten before," ver. 24, it is of no weight at all.

For it is not said, that Abram had eaten; nor how long since it was that his followers had: nor do we know that they had plenty of bread and wine among their spoils. However, Melchizedek hospitably brought forth bread and wine, whatever Abram's necessity might be. Abram was blessed before, and yet Melchizedek blessed him; and why might not he bring forth corporal refreshments, though he had great spoils?

Bellarmino urgeth, "That the Scripture so often mentioning the priesthood of Melchizedek, as distinct from that of Aaron, and very like to that of Christ, it ought also somewhere to deliver what was the sacrifice of Melchizedek. For a priesthood is ordained for sacrifice; and where the sacrifice

* 1 Sam. viii. 2. 1 Kings iv. 21. 2 Kings viii. 8. with the LXXII. and Heb. v. 1.

is unknown there the priesthood is unknown also. But there is no mention of any sacrifice which Melchizedek offered, if it be not mentioned here." I answer,

1. A man must be a priest before he hath right to sacrifice ; and will continue so though he never sacrifice, or cease to do it. One of these may be without the other, and therefore may be known without the other. The priests of Israel continued priests after they were by their age discharged from public service. It is very absurd to affirm, that a priest continues no longer a priest than he sacrificeth. The priests of the Roman Church keep their character, though they never say mass.

2. It does not become us to prescribe to God. He thought not fit to mention the genealogy of Melchizedek, nor is he obliged to tell us what sacrifice he offered.

It is farther urged from these words, "For he was the priest," which contain the reasons why he brought forth bread and wine, and constrains us to grant that this was a sacrifice. These words, "For he was the priest," &c. can have no other sense, but that he did the function of a priest in the bread and wine which he brought. So it is expressed in the annotations of the Douay Bible. Bonfrerius goes farther, and does not only lay hold of the causal particle to prove a sacrifice, but affirms that there can be no other cause why Christ should be styled a "priest after the order of Melchizedek." I answer,

First, That this causal particle *for*, on which they lay so great a stress, is not in the Hebrew text, nor in the LXXII. nor in the citation from them by Epiphanius :* and though the Hebrew particle does in some places stand for a causal, yet it being most commonly a copulative, there is no shadow of reason why we should reject the most received, and betake ourselves to the most infrequent acceptation of it.

Secondly, That this *for* was not in the ancient Latin version, however it be now in the vulgar. It is certain that Jerome,† in his Hebrew Questions, hath it not. Nor hath he it in his Epistle to Evagrius, where he quotes this text in Hebrew, and translates the words into Latin. "And he was the priest," he translates *Erat autem Sacerdos* : after the

* Epiphan. advers. Hæres. l. 11. tom. 1. [vol. 1. p. 469. Colon. 1682.]

† Et ipse Sacerdos Dei excelsi, &c. Hieron. Quæst. Hebr. in Gene. [vol. 3. p. 328. Veron. 1735.]

same manner St. Cyprian quotes this passage,* *Fuit autem sacerdos, &c.* And thus also St. Austin hath it. In a Latin Bible printed at Lyons (no Protestant Bible you may be sure) in the year 1527, we find it thus : *Et ipse erat sacerdos Deo altissimo.* And therefore these words may well relate to what follows, ver. 19, "And he blessed him, and said," &c. Nor ought our version to be blamed for rendering the words as we now have them in our Bibles, nor our divines for connecting them with the following. We have an English Bible printed in the days of Henry VIII. (which I hope our adversaries will not call by way of reproach a Protestant Bible),† that will justify us. Thus we find it there : "But Melchizedek the king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine. And he beyng the priest of the most hye God, blessed him and said," &c. Nor was this corrected in another edition of the year 1537, where we find it, "And he being the priest of the most hyghest God, blessed him," &c.

Bellarmino proceeds and urgeth, that in the Hebrew text, after these words, "Priest of the most high God," there is an accent (called Soph Pasuk) as a sign that the period is there terminated, and those words cannot be connected to the following, "and he blessed him ;" but to the foregoing, where it is said, "he brought forth bread and wine." This distinction (he must mean of verses) he tells us is found in the Chaldee, Greek, and Latin text. This he thinks so weighty a matter, that without the causal particle, for which he contended above, it is from hence plain, that the bread and wine were brought forth for sacrifice.

To this I answer,

First, That he might have spared his pains. There was no need he should appeal to the Hebrew, Chaldee, Greek, and Latin, that the verse ended there (for Soph Pasuk signifies no more but the end of the verse), for our English version ends the verse there also ; so far were our interpreters from innovating, or from thinking this anything to the purpose in hand.

Secondly, Though our English do observe this distinction of verses which the Cardinal contends for, yet certain it is, that their own Bibles have not observed it. And he does but wound his own Church when he strikes at ours. I have given one instance above, and need only to add, that the vulgar Latin,

* Cyprian. Epist. ad Celsum. [Epist. 63. ad Cæcilium, p. 226. Venet. 1738.] De Doctrin. Christian. l. 4. c. 21.

† Printed 1535.

which they of the Church of Rome adhere to, observes not this distinction which the Cardinal lays so great a stress upon. For thus the vulgar, *At vero Melchisedech Rex Salem proferens panem et vinum (erat enim sacerdos Dei altissimi) benedixit ei et ait, &c.* We see here a plain connection or conjunction of those words, which the Cardinal will not allow of a little above.

Thirdly, Certain it is, that this Soph Pasuk hath no such force as the Cardinal pretends. And it is very surprising to me, that the Cardinal, who pretended to skill in the Hebrew language, and wrote an Hebrew grammar, should discourse at this weak rate. It were very easy to produce many instances where the Soph Pasuk does not terminate the period, nor restrain what goes before it from connecting what follows it. Gen. xxiii. 17, it is said, "that the field and cave, &c. were made sure:" there in the Hebrew we have a Soph Pasuk, which yet does not terminate the period, or forbid the connection of those words with the following. It follows, ver. 18, "unto Abraham for a possession," &c. To which may be added, Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. Deut. xxviii. 56, 57. chap. xxx. 17, 18. To which may be added, 1 Kings viii. 15, 16. and ver. 31, 32, &c. chap. x. 4, 5. 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19. I dare appeal to the conscience of any honest man that understands anything of this matter, whether this be not a mere shift and empty pretence, which yet the Cardinal lays a great stress and weight upon.

Fourthly, Nor is there any need at all of this bother which the Cardinal makes, the words of Moses being very plain and distinct. For he represents Melchizedek as a king, and, as an instance of his royal bounty, tells us that he brought forth bread and wine; and also as a priest, and as such he is said to bless Abram, and to take tithes of him.

Bellarmino proceeds, and denies that Melchizedek blessed Abram as a priest, whereas Abram himself was a priest; "and therefore he did not bless him as a priest, but as a greater, or as one absolutely greater, being king and priest. It is not peculiar to a priest to bless; Solomon blessed the people, and so did David and Joshua. And the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, does not from his blessing Abram infer that he was a priest, but only that he was greater than Abram."

To this I answer:

First, That this was a sacerdotal blessing is very evident, it being not only joined with receiving tithes, but is, together

with that of receiving tithes, produced by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when he undertakes to prove Christ (as of the order of Melchizedek) to be a priest of an higher rank and order than that of Aaron. To what purpose did he produce this passage, if the benediction of Melchizedek were not a sacerdotal action, as well as his receiving tithes?

Secondly, Abram was a prince as well as a priest,* and therefore, if because he was a priest he did not bless him, it may be said with as good reason, that he being a prince, Melchizedek could not bless him as such an one.

Thirdly, There was no need that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews should from this blessing infer that Melchizedek was a priest. This Moses and the Psalmist, both which he cites, had said expressly. But that he was a greater priest than Aaron (which supposeth him a priest) he proves from his benediction and receiving tithes, Heb. vii.

The Cardinal goes on, and urgeth, "that if Christ be a priest after the order of Melchizedek, he must agree with him in that which belonged peculiarly to his priesthood, *viz.* the form of such a sacrifice. This sacrifice he makes proper to his priesthood: that he blessed and received tithes, was common to him with the Aaronical priesthood; that he was not anointed with sensible oil, that he had no predecessor or successor, was common to him with Abel and others: that his genealogy is not reported, is not only extrinsical to his priesthood, but also common to him with Job, Elias, and others; but his offering bread and wine is proper to him, and chiefly belongs to his priesthood, it being a proper act thereof."

To this I answer:

First, That the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who well understood what chiefly belonged to the priesthood of Melchizedek, does not so much as mention his bringing forth (much less his offering) bread and wine; he does not do it there where he professedly treats of the priesthood of Melchizedek, and its taking place of that of Aaron: he mentions it not even there where he tells us both of his "blessing Abram," and taking tithes; and therefore, according to the Cardinal, he hath omitted that which chiefly belongs to his priesthood.

Secondly, That he blessed and tithed Abram, from whom Levi and Aaron descended, is that which the author of the

* Gen. xxiii. 6. with chap. xiv. 14, 21, 24.

Epistle to the Hebrews mentions, and brings as an argument to prove him superior to the Aaronical priests; and surely this cannot belong in common to the sons of Aaron.

Thirdly, That Abel, Job, and Elias, are nowhere represented under the character of “priests of the most high God:” and therefore they are impertinently mentioned by the Cardinal: besides, we have Abel’s genealogy, an account of the country of Elias, and of the country, and wife, and children, and death of Job; but there is not in the book of Genesis, which gives the genealogy of others, any account of that of Melchizedek, in whom alone all the particulars meet, which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions as belonging to him.

Fourthly, That if it were granted (which never can be proved) that Melchizedek did offer bread and wine, yet would not this be proper to him, but common to him with the sons of Aaron.

I proceed to prove :

II. That if Melchizedek had offered such a sacrifice, it will not thence follow, that the priesthood of Melchizedek consisted in this, and was by this distinguished from that of Aaron.

The reason is obvious, *viz.* because the sons of Aaron did also offer bread and wine. This appears abundantly from Levit. ii. with Exod. xxix. 40, and Numb. xxviii. 13, 14. That in which the priesthood of Melchizedek does peculiarly consist, cannot belong to Aaron; but the offering of bread and wine did belong to Aaron and his sons, and cannot therefore be peculiar to Melchizedek. Bellarmine is forced to confess, that under the Aaronical priesthood bread and wine were sacrificed; but then he thinks to come off by subterfuges.

What he says is to this effect:—1. That the bread and wine sacrificed by Aaron and his sons was not a principal sacrifice, but rather a part, or kind of sauce to some other sacrifice: that which Melchizedek offered was by itself. 2. The bread which Aaron and his sons offered was always sprinkled with oil, that of Melchizedek was simple bread. 3. Another difference between those two priesthoods was this, that Aaron offered all sorts of sacrifices, bloody and unbloody, but Melchizedek the unbloody only.” To which I answer:

First, That it is not universally true, that the meat-offering was a sauce, or accessory to some other sacrifice. This speaks the Cardinal’s ignorance, or something worse. The Hebrew doctors give us a truer account of things, when they tell us of a double minchah, or meat-offering, that was accessory or

belonged to another sacrifice, and that which was solitary and offered by itself.* The latter of these were either public or private. They reckon three of the first sort, and five of the second, which I shall not need to repeat here. Nor is this to be rejected as a Rabbinical fancy: for the Scripture assures us, that this meat-offering was sometimes solitary, and no ways belonging to any other offering. This appears from Levit. v. 11, 12, 13.

Secondly, That the bread which Aaron offered was always sprinkled with oil is not true. And yet if it were, it were nothing to the purpose. How can the Cardinal tell, but that the bread of Melchizedek might have some oil in it also? Oil is expressly forbid in the bread-offering, Levit. v. 11, and also in that mentioned Numb. v. 15; and a man may justly admire the Cardinal should affirm, "that the bread offered by Aaronical priests was sprinkled with oil."

Thirdly, The other difference assigned between the two priesthoods is groundless, and can never be proved; who will believe this to be the difference between the priesthood of Melchizedek and Aaron, that the former offered one sort of sacrifice, the latter all: that Aaron should offer the principal, Melchizedek only the accessory; Melchizedek only simple bread, the other bread with oil and incense: in a word, that Melchizedek's sacrifice was short of Aaron's, and therefore his priesthood better: for a bloody sacrifice was of greater value than a bread-offering, which was then accepted when the other could not be had, Lev. v. 11.

Fourthly, According to the account of our adversaries, Jesus Christ would be a priest after the order of Aaron; for on the cross he offered a bloody, and in the eucharist, according to them, an unbloody sacrifice.

Bellarmino pretends, "That if Christ be a priest for ever, the rite of sacrificing must continue for ever: he cannot be said to be a priest who hath no sacrifice to offer. But there can be no sacrifice, if we destroy that of the mass." To which I answer:

First, That the priest's office was never restrained to sacrificing; that was but one part of the priestly office: there were many other offices peculiar to that order of men, besides sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice, and burning the parts of

* לפני עצמה & מנחת נכסים Vid. Maimon. Præfat. in Menach. Vid. Abarbinel. Præfat. in Levit.

it. Levit. i. 5, chap. iv. 6, with chap. i. 8. Such were the blessing the people, Numb. vi. 23, chap. viii. 2, chap. x. 8, the lighting the lamps, blowing the trumpets, &c.

Secondly, As it was a part of the high priest's office, on the day of expiation, to carry the blood of the expiatory sacrifice every year into the holy of holies;* so part of our Saviour's high priestly office is to be done in the heavenly sanctuary, where he is for ever during this world, presenting the merit of his oblation, and interceding for us. "And the resemblance our Saviour had to Melchizedek, was in this, that he abideth a priest for ever in doing this." Christ did upon the cross perfect his oblation, but not finish his priestly office; for he is a priest for ever, "not as offering sacrifices," as Theodoret† well observes, "for he once offered his body, but as a Mediator, bringing believers unto God."

Thirdly, He is a priest for ever, because he can never be despoiled of this character and dignity, and "ever liveth to make intercession for us," Heb. vii. 25. He is so, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life," ver. 16. But this does not infer the repetition of his oblation made on the cross. This repetition would derogate from the virtue of that oblation, "for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14. "Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people: for this he did once when he offered up himself." Heb. vii. 26, 27.

III. That granting that Melchizedek did offer such a sacrifice, and that thereby his priesthood was distinguished from that of Aaron; it does not hence follow, that Christ ought to institute in his Church an unbloody sacrifice under the species of bread and wine.

The sacrifice of the mass will not result from this, nor by any sufficient reason can it be inferred from it. For why may not the sacrifice of the cross, instead of the mass, be sufficient? Christ there gave himself up for the life of the world: the bread that came down from heaven, and that is the food of

* Vid. Annotations on St. Paul's Epistles, printed at Oxford, 1684, on Heb. viii. 1.

† Theodoret in Heb. vi. 20. [vol. 3. p. 583. Hal. 1771.]

our souls, was there broken : there was his blood shed which gives us life. What need of the sacrifice of the mass ? Is there any reason to conclude that must be instituted upon supposition of the premises ? There is a great difference between the sacrifice of Melchizedek and that of the mass : what was offered in one was bread and wine ; the other is the body and blood of Christ : the substance of bread and wine is in one, the accidents only in the other ; we read nothing of consecration of the one, the other is consecrated with great ceremony. Melchizedek was a king, without genealogy, alone, without predecessor or successor : is there anything like this in the mass priests ? Melchizedek offered once, and gave of his oblation to the uncircumcised : is there anything like this in the mass ? Here is no blood in Melchizedek's oblation ; will he allow this to be said of the mass ? His oblation depended on no other, but that of the mass is dependent on that of the cross. If the sacrifice of the mass must hence be established, one would think the resemblance between it and the other should be greater.

So it is ; the doctrine which the Church of Rome teacheth of the sacrifice of the mass, needs proof from Scripture, and they that maintain the doctrine, are willing to defend it thence. But certain it is, that many wise men of the Church of Rome know well, that it cannot be maintained from this and other Scriptures produced to that purpose. This was frankly acknowledged by Georgius di Ataide,* a divine of the kingdom of Portugal, in the Council of Trent, who was against those who went about to prove the sacrifice of the mass from the Scriptures, and "sought to find in the Scriptures that which is not there, giving occasion to the adversaries to calumniate the truth, while they see it grounded upon such an unstable sand." He added, "as to the fact of Melchizedek ; that Christ was a priest of that order, as he was the only begotten, eternal, without predecessor, father, mother, or genealogy. And that this is proved too plainly by the Epistle to the Hebrews, where St. Paul, discoursing at large of this place, doth handle the eternity and singularity of this priesthood, and maketh no mention of the bread and wine." He repeated the doctrine of St. Austin, "that when there is a fit place for anything to be spoken, and it is not spoken, an argument may be drawn from the authority negatively." I have before men-

* Vid. History of the Council of Trent, p. 546.

tioned Cardinal Cajetan affirming, "that in this story of Melchizedek, there is no mention of sacrifice or oblation." Salmeron* to the same purpose, is so far from pretending that the mass is taught in the Scriptures, that he placeth it among those Apostolical traditions which were not committed to writing. Mariana, in his Commentaries on Genesis, does indeed affirm, "that Melchizedek sacrificed or offered to God bread and wine, the symbol," says he, "of our Sacrifice," for which he quotes St. Jerome, and tells us, that the Psalmist's words, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," and the words of St. Paul to the Hebrews, refer to the same matter; but that which is very surprising is this, that the same Mariana, when he writes upon the Hebrews, finds nothing there to this purpose; and though he refers to that Epistle in his notes upon Genesis, yet when he comes to the place, he refers indeed to his notes on Genesis, but can find nothing of the sacrifice he mentions there, and refers to the Epistle to the Hebrews for; instead of satisfying his reader, he hath these words,† "*Mirror in hoc capite, &c.* I wonder that in this chapter, among so many similitudes by which Melchizedek represented Christ, that he says nothing of the sacrifice of bread and wine which Melchizedek offered as we have said (Gen. xiv. 18), the symbol of our sacrifice and eucharist: of which I had rather hear others than pronounce myself." A plain confession that there was nothing to be found in this place to the purpose for which he alleged it.

The second pretence for the sacrifice of the mass is fetched from the paschal lamb, Exod. xii. It seems very hard to understand how this can be anything like an argument; but we must take it as it is. Cardinal Bellarmine‡ endeavours to form an argument from hence, and thus it is: "The celebration of the passover was an express figure of the eucharist; but the passover was a sacrifice, therefore the eucharist must be so too, that the antitype may answer the type."

I answer:

First, That this way of reasoning will do them one time or other more hurt than good. It would spoil all, were it used in the case of Melchizedek. His bread and wine was an express figure of the eucharist; but that was really bread and wine which he brought forth, and therefore the substance of

* Salmeron in Epistol. S. Paul. Commentar. tom. 13. p. 219. [Colon. Agr. 1604.]

† Mariana in Heb. vii. 27.

‡ Bellarmin. de Missa. l. 1. c. 7. [ut supra, p. 426. col. 1.]

bread and wine remains in the eucharist, that the antitype may answer the type; such an argument will be apt to go too far, and prove too much, and turn head upon them that use it. Again, by this way of arguing, we may conclude that Christ was slain, and roasted before he could be received in the eucharist; for so it was with the type, and the antitype ought to answer the type.

Secondly, It ought to be proved that the paschal lamb was a type of the eucharist. This is taken for granted indeed; the truth is, it can never be proved. The paschal lamb was indeed a type of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross: here is a marvellous agreement between the type and the antitype, as it were easy to shew. That the paschal lamb was a type of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, is undeniable. St. Paul says, 1 Cor. v. 7, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." And when Christ suffered, a bone of him was not to be broken, John xix. 36, and it is said "that the Scripture might be fulfilled," Exod. xii. 46. This was a known law of the paschal lamb, that a bone of it was not to be broken.

But he pretends to prove that the paschal lamb was a type of the eucharist, and to that purpose produceth the words above-named, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." He affirms that "it appears from the Gospel, that the Apostles did eat Christ's flesh before his passion, and consequently did eat the true paschal lamb, to the feasting upon which we are exhorted, 1 Cor. v. 8, Let us keep the feast, &c. This feast must follow the immolation, the lamb must first be slain before it can be eaten: and therefore immolation must precede the manducation in the last Supper, before the passion of Christ."

I answer:

First, Here is no proof in all this: nothing but bold affirmation. And because the doctrine of the mass is framed, it must be maintained: what should be proved is taken for granted, *viz.* that the paschal lamb was a figure of the eucharist. Here is no proof, but instead of it false reasoning. For this may be retorted: the paschal lamb was not to be eaten till it was slain, and the blood of it shed: but the eucharist before Christ's passion was eaten, before Christ's blood was shed on the cross. Therefore that eucharist was not the antitype of the eating of the paschal lamb.

Secondly, As to the place alleged, *viz.* "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," it is evident that it cannot be consistent

with the doctrine of an unbloody sacrifice, and corporal manducation, which the Church of Rome contends for. For the word sacrificed imports being slain or killed, and also that it is already past. It is (or hath been) sacrificed for us. He speaks of something known and notorious. And whereas he says, "Let us keep the feast," it is manifest that he alludes to the feast of unleavened bread, which commenced upon the slaying of the paschal lamb. Nor can he be supposed here to require a corporal manducation of the natural flesh of Christ: for the leaven, and the eating, and the bread, must be understood alike. Now it is certain that the leaven of malice and wickedness is not eaten with the mouth; nor is the bread of sincerity and truth to be chewed by the teeth; and therefore the eating cannot be meant of a bodily eating, but a spiritual, John vi. 35.

The Cardinal endeavours to prove the paschal lamb a figure of the eucharist.

First, "Because the eucharist was instituted at the time when the paschal lamb was slain."

Secondly, "That lamb was slain in memory of the Lord's passing over, and the deliverance out of Egypt; the eucharist is in memory of Christ's passage from this world to his Father, and our deliverance from the power of Satan."

Thirdly, "The lamb was slain, that it might be eaten as a viaticum, and was eaten by the Israelities like travellers, with staves in their hands, &c. so is the eucharist a viaticum of them that travel to an heavenly country."

Fourthly, "The lamb might be eaten by none but such as were circumcised and clean, and in Jerusalem; so they must be baptized, clean, and in the Catholic Church, that partake of the eucharist."

I answer:

I. As to the first; that a figure should be completed on the day of its first institution or celebration, is by no means necessary. The high priest's going into the holy of holies was a figure of Christ's ascension into heaven, but was not performed on the same day or month in which Christ ascended. Again, though the eucharist were instituted at the time of the passover, yet was this by accident, and not by any law belonging to the eucharist. It was instituted on the fourteenth day of the first month, at the time of the passover: there was reason why the passover should be celebrated then; but the eucharist, though it happened to be then appointed, is not

restrained to that particular time. It was in the mean conveniently instituted at the close of the passover, as that which was to take its place, the eucharist being a memorial of the death of Christ, as the paschal lamb was the type of it, and as such was very congruously appointed at the approach of his death. But though the passover was restrained to a certain month and day, and to be offered but once in the year, and eaten in the evening of the day, and followed with a feast of unleavened bread, yet these are not the laws of the eucharist, or usages peculiar to the mass.

II. As to the second; it is granted that the paschal lamb was slain, and its blood put upon the door-posts, to avert the destroying angel; and continued afterwards as a memorial of the deliverance out of Egypt; but however this suits with the death of Christ, by which we are saved from the wrath of God, and rescued from the power of the devil, yet it by no means corresponds with the eucharist, or unbloody sacrifice of the mass.

III. As to the third; whatever the eucharist be to the devout partaker, yet no stress ought to be laid upon this correspondence between it and the passover kept in Egypt, because that was a rite peculiar to the passover of Egypt, as the Hebrew doctors well observe, and not used in after-ages. Besides, it is from the death of Christ we hope to enter into an heavenly country, of which the eucharist is but a sacrament.

IV. As to the fourth; those resemblances mentioned do not infer that the paschal lamb was a figure of the eucharist, because those conditions, as to person and place, were required in other religious services; besides, there are many other things in which the difference between the passover and sacrifice of the mass is very discernible: not to repeat, that the passover was restrained to a month, a day, an evening, &c. it ought to be celebrated according to its first institution, to be eaten that evening, and not reserved, and not to be carried abroad in procession. Let our adversaries say how this can agree with their sacrifice of the mass.

For the pains which the Cardinal takes to prove the passover a sacrifice, he need not have taken it, for I do readily grant it, nor do I see any just cause to deny it; but all this will not prove it a figure of the eucharist. Besides, though it be a sacrifice, yet it was not propitiatory, much less so for the dead as well as living, and therefore no very fit figure of the sacrifice of the mass. Again, were it proved a figure of

the eucharist, this would be no competent proof for the sacrifice of the mass. For the passover among the Jews may be considered either as a sacrament of that Church, or as a sacrifice strictly so called; supposing it a figure of the eucharist in the first respect, this will not establish the sacrifice of the mass.

I now proceed to the third pretence from the holy Scriptures for the sacrifice of the mass, and that is fetched from *Exod. xxiv.* where, after the law given at Mount Sinai, God enters into covenant with the Israelites, promiseth them much good, and they promise obedience: this covenant was confirmed by a solemn sacrifice, and the sprinkling of blood. It is said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words," *ver. 8.* It is pretended that this figure was fulfilled in the last supper in the institution of the eucharist, and therefore the blood of that old testament being the blood of a victim properly sacrificed, the blood of the new testament must be the blood of a proper sacrifice also, and therefore Christ is a victim sacrificed in the eucharist.

From this it might have been as well inferred, and with as much truth, that that of Moses being a sacrifice of blood, that of the mass must also be a bloody sacrifice. But this would be too much. And they who maintain the doctrine of the mass, will infer no more from these figures than will just serve their purpose; otherwise it were very natural to infer the substance of bread and wine in the eucharist, and not accidents only from the bread and wine of Melchizedek; and that both kinds are in the eucharist to be received. But they that we have to do with, will take care that these figures shall not be used against their received doctrine. And yet we find that the ancient fathers of the Church do affirm that Christ offered the same oblation with Melchizedek; and infer from thence, that the symbols in the eucharist are bread and wine. For instances to this purpose, I refer the reader to the learned author of a late treatise.*

Cardinal Bellarmine takes a great deal of pains to prove the mass from this chapter of Exodus. This figure he conceits must be completed in the last supper and institution of the eucharist: then he says the new testament was made, and the words, "This cup is the new testament in my blood,"

* Full View of the Eucharist, p. 101, &c.

&c. confirm him in this belief. After this he says, "If Christ's testament was not made in the last supper, it must be made on the cross; and yet," says he, "all the conditions of a testament agree with the last supper, none of them with the cross;" and here he enlargeth to no less than seven particulars.*

But he might have spared his pains: for we do not believe that the new testament, or covenant, strictly speaking, was made either on the cross, or in the last supper. Not on the cross, for we are well assured that it was then ratified and dedicated, Heb. ix. 18, which supposeth it to have a being before. And for the Lord's supper, it is gross to call it the new testament, or covenant, though it be indeed one of the sacraments of it. Were it the new testament itself, baptism (a sacrament of the new testament) would be a sacrament of the Lord's supper. Besides, were the supper the new testament, none could be said to partake of this new testament who did not partake of the eucharist, which would exclude not only those who deceased before the institution of the eucharist, but all others also who died before they did partake of it. When Christ calls the cup "the blood of the new testament," it is supposed the new testament was in being before. And thus it was when the covenant was ratified in the time of Moses: "Behold the blood of the covenant," says he, "which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words," Exod. xxiv. 8. That blood was not the very covenant, for that was in being before; and we read of the "book of the covenant," verse 7, but it was the blood by which it was ratified and confirmed. If the old covenant were not made in the ceremony mentioned, Exod. xxiv, then is that matter ill applied to the eucharist by him that affirms the new covenant or testament to be therein made. And if that ceremony did but declare and confirm the old testament, Heb. ix. 18, then was it accomplished on the cross, and still does not belong to the eucharist, much less prove the sacrifice of the mass.

The figure (Exod. xxiv) is so far from proving the sacrifice of the mass, that it rather makes against it. The blood of the new testament, in correspondence to that of the old, Exod. xxiv, must be the blood of a victim slain before; but Jesus Christ, in the last supper, was not slain, and therefore the blood of Jesus in the last supper was not the blood of the new testament, and antitype of that figure. If these words

* Bellarm. de Miss. l. 1. c. 8. [ut supra, p. 429. col. 1.]

of Jesus, "This is my blood of the new testament," speak the blood already shed, then must Christ have suffered before; if they do not, then are they no proof of the sacrifice of the mass.

I proceed now from the figures, to consider what pretences are fetched from the Prophets for the establishing the sacrifice of the mass.

And I find the first which Cardinal Bellarmine urgeth, is fetched from the words of the man of God to Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 35, *viz.* "I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart, and in my mind; and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever."—"This place, some of the ancients expound," says he, "of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christians, succeeding the Aaronical, and which would remain to the end of the world." I answer:

That God in the holy Scriptures expounds this place otherwise; Solomon removed Abiathar, of the house of Eli, 1 Kings ii. 27, "that he might fulfil the word of the Lord which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh." And this was all that the man of God means, when he denounceth against Eli's "father's house," 1 Sam. ii. 31; for by his father's house is meant, not the house of Aaron, but of Ithamar; and were it not so, the words could not be fulfilled in rejecting Abiathar, and setting up Zadok, who was descended from Aaron also. After all, to bear us down that this was a type of the mass priests, who were to succeed the Aaronical, is to beg and not prove the question: there being no shadow of a proof offered.

The second proof is from Solomon's words, Prov. ix. 1: "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts," &c. Now it will seem hard to prove the sacrifice of the mass from hence; nor is there any pretence more than that St. Cyprian and St. Augustin are produced applying these words to the eucharist. I answer:

That here is no proof of the sacrifice of the mass, as it is now taught in the Roman Church; no evidence from the text that these words have any reference to the eucharist; no mention of a sacrifice, but rather of a feast: it is a table, ver. 2, not an altar that men are invited to; "to eat bread and drink wine," ver. 5, and it is all but parabolical, such as that of St. Matthew xxii. and taken out of a book of parables too.

The third pretence is taken from these words, Isa. xix. 19, 21:

“In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, &c. and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation, &c. These sacrifices must be such, strictly so called, because of the express mention of an altar, and therefore they plainly shew, that among the Gentiles in the days of the Messias, a sacrifice, strictly so called, should be offered up.” I answer :

First, That I grant that this place speaks of what shall obtain among the Gentiles in the days of the Messias : that they should embrace the true religion, expressed here in such terms as were at that time best understood. The Christian worship is expressed in terms agreeing to what obtained under the law of Moses, as I shall have further occasion to observe. No wonder then that it is expressed here by speaking the language of Canaan, by swearing to the Lord, by erecting an altar, doing sacrifice, and making vows ; these being acts of religion that then obtained.

Secondly, We cannot infer from hence the sacrifice of the mass, for there is no necessity that the altar here should infer a sacrifice strictly so called ; both because every altar does not suppose such a sacrifice (see Josh. xxii. 26, 27), and that the sacrifices mentioned here are spiritual : all other sacrifices were annexed to one certain place, (see Deut. xii. 13, 14.) And the setting up an altar, strictly so called, would be a very unfit expression of the embracing the true religion, during the dispensation of Moses. The altar here is not said to be for sacrifice ; but the altar and pillar are to be for a sign and witness, ver. 20. And for the sacrifices and oblations, St. Jerome, upon the place, interprets them in a spiritual sense, of a contrite spirit, and the elevation of the hands in devout prayer. If so, the Cardinal had better not have mentioned St. Jerome, when he urgeth this text for proof of the sacrifice of the mass. For, as he confesseth,* “no visible altar is necessary for spiritual sacrifices.”

The fourth pretence is taken from the same prophet: “And I will also take of them for priests, and for Levites, saith the Lord.”† To which are added these of Jeremiah, “Neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before me, to offer burnt-offerings, and to kindle meat-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.” These words, the Cardinal contends, must be

* *Ad sacrificia spiritualia nullum Altare visibile necessarium est.*

† Isaiah lxvi. 21, with Jer. xxxiii. [18.]

understood of Christ's priests, and appeals to St. Jerome and to Theodoret in the case, and a great stress he lays upon this, that they were to offer burnt-offerings. I answer :

First, That I am content to yield to the Cardinal, that the words have reference to Christian priests, or ministers in holy things ; I will not contend about it.

Secondly, These words are to be literally understood, or they are not : if they are, then are Christian priests obliged to burnt-offerings and meat-offerings, &c. If they are not, they are impertinently produced as a proof of the sacrifice of the mass ; which, according to the Church of Rome, is a sacrifice strictly so called, and according to the letter. If we keep to the letter, they prove too much ; if not, they prove too little.

Thirdly, It is evident, that these words are not to be understood according to the strict letter : for if they were, they would prove the perpetuity of the Aaronical priesthood. For this covenant with the Levites, the priests, God's ministers, Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21, shall not sooner fail than the covenant of God of the day and of the night. And it is without ground, that a real sacrifice is inferred from hence, when the offering mentioned in Isaiah, chap. lxvi. 20, cannot be understood of a sacrifice, strictly so called, it being an offering of men. And it is still very unjust to quote St. Jerome* and Theodoret,† for the proof of that which is not contested, and to conceal what they say, which makes against the main cause contended for. For they expound these places in a spiritual sense, of the spiritual victims, which are pleasing to God, and the reasonable sacrifice offered up to him.

The fifth pretence is taken from the prophet Daniel, chap. viii. 11, 12, where it is said, that Antichrist should take away the daily sacrifice. "This place," says Bellarmine, "Hippolytus understands of the sacrifice of the mass ; and that though Daniel seems to speak there of Antiochus, yet he does it of him as a type of Antichrist, as appears by comparing this place with Revel. xiii." I answer :

That though it be granted that Antiochus was a figure or type of Antichrist, it does not thence follow, that the daily sacrifice of the Jews was a type of, or did in the least infer, or suppose, the sacrifice of the mass.

That the daily sacrifice, was a sacrifice properly and strictly

* Hieron. in Isa. lxvi. 21.

† Theod. in Jerem. xxxiii. 18.

so called, cannot be denied ; but it does not thence follow, that it must be a type also of such a sacrifice in the Christian Church. There is no need that the type and antitype should be the things of the same species and substance. If there be, the substance of bread and wine in the eucharist must remain, that it may answer the type of Melchizedek's.

Again, The daily sacrifice was not a fit type of the sacrifice of the mass ; that was bloody, this an unbloody sacrifice ; that was offered morning and evening, this only in the morning ; that in one place and upon one altar, this in many places at once. Nor is there any shadow of reason to believe that daily sacrifice a type of that of the mass.

THE TEXTS EXAMINED WHICH PAPISTS CITE OUT OF THE
BIBLE, FOR THE PROOF OF THEIR DOCTRINE OF THE
SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

PART II.

THE next place produced as a proof of the sacrifice of the mass by Bellarmine, is from the prophet Malachi, chap. i. 11. "My name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering," &c. This is thought an eminent proof of the sacrifice of the mass. Bellarmine might have spared his pains he tooks, to prove that the words cannot be understood of the sacrifice of the cross, nor of the Jewish sacrifices, nor of those of the pious Gentiles before the coming of Christ, nor of the idolatrous Gentiles: I easily grant all this. The great question between us is, whether the words be to be understood of the sacrifice of the mass, or not; or of other spiritual sacrifices, such as prayer, and praise, &c.

It is not sufficient to justify the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, that these words are by the ancients applied to the eucharist, and allowed to belong to it; because the eucharist is not by us denied in some sense to be a sacrifice; nor were it any hard thing to shew upon what reasons it is frequently called so by the ancient writers. But we are now to consider the doctrine of the Roman Church, by which the sacrifice of the mass is affirmed to be a proper sacrifice, propitiatory for the sins of the living and the dead; and we will inquire if any such thing may be learned from this place.

There is nothing in the words themselves that will oblige us to believe that they are to be understood of a sacrifice, strictly and properly so called, that Christians were to offer up to God. "Incense, and a pure offering" do not constrain us to understand the words of a proper sacrifice.

For incense, it is to be understood properly and literally of material incense; or improperly, of the prayers and devotions

of the Christians. If taken in its proper sense, then are Christians obliged to offer incense still, as the Jews were by the law of Moses; and yet the first and best Christians offered no incense. This we learn from the ancient apologists for the Christian religion.* *Thura plane non emimus*, says Tertullian. Instead of incense, he tells us what Christians offered, *Orationem de carne pudica, de anima innocenti, de spiritu sancto profectam; non grana thuris unius assis, &c.* Arnobius tells us "that the Christians were accused for want of images and altars," and *quod non cæorum sanguinem animantium demus, non thura, &c.*† and because "they offered not sacrifices and incense." If incense here be taken improperly for the prayers and devotions offered up to God (as the Chaldee paraphrast understands this place), then are these words impertinently alleged for a proof of a strictly so called or proper sacrifice.

For the pure offering here mentioned, it will do no service to the cause in hand; for the word we render *offering*, does often signify not a sacrifice, but a gift or present. The same word is used in Isaiah, chap. lxvi. 20, where it is said, "they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots," &c. where, by offering, no man can understand a sacrifice properly so called. Thus St. Paul, Rom. xv. 16, mentions the offering up of the Gentiles. And we Christians are called "an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. ii. 5. And the pure offering imports no more than this, that this service or offering is sincere and without mixture, or a spiritual sacrifice, in the phrase of St. Peter. More than this comes to, can never be collected from those words of Malachi.

Nor shall it need to seem strange to any man, that the spiritual sacrifices of Christians should in the Prophets (during the economy of Moses) be described in terms that were conformable to what was used and practised in that time in the nation of the Jews. For nothing is more common than this among those sacred writers. Thus the advancement of the Christian Church is expressed by "the establishing the mountain of the Lord's house in the top of the mountains, and exalting it above the hills," Isa. ii. 2. And the kingly office of the Messiah (chap. ix. 7) is described by his "sitting upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and establish

* Apolog, c. 42. [p. 34. Par. 1695.] et c. 30. [Ibid. p. 27.]

† Advers. Gentes. l. 6. [p. 200. Wirceb. 1783.]

it." Thus are the Christian worshippers (or ministers in holy things) called priests and Levites, and their services are expressed by "offering burnt-offerings, and kindling meat offering," &c. Jer. xxxiii. 18. And Christ's planting his Church is expressed by "building the Lord's temple," Zech. vi. 12; and the Christian worship by "keeping the feast of tabernacles," chap. xiv. 16. The Messiah himself is sometimes called David, Hos. iii. 5; and his forerunner John Baptist, who was more than a prophet, is in this prophet Malachi, chap. iv. 5, promised under the character of Elijah the prophet. No wonder Christian services should be expressed by this prophet under the character of incense and a "pure offering." Rom. xii. 1. Heb. xiii. 15. Phil. iv. 18. Rom. xv. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 6. Phil. ii. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 5, our spiritual services in the New Testament are thus expressed. Our yielding obedience to Christ; charitable offices and alms; converting men to the faith, or dying for it; praising and glorifying God, are expressed after the same manner. Christ hath made us, not only kings, "but priests unto God and his Father," Rev. i. 6. And now it is not strange that our services should be predicted under the character of incense and a pure offering.

The bare letter is not always to be insisted on as a sufficient proof of our proposition. Even in the New Testament we are not always to do this; but much less in the prophetic writings. We are required "to beware of dogs," Phil. iii. 2, "to have salt in ourselves," Mark ix. 50; and forbid "to cast pearls before swine," Matth. vii. 6, but we are concerned here beyond the letter. And our Saviour's words are not sometimes to be understood according to the letter, when he speaks of "living water," John iv. 10, 32, 34, "of bread that endures for ever," ver. 9. chap. vi. 27, of the "leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," Matth. xvi. 6, 12: nor this offering in Malachi to be understood of a proper sacrifice; and this will appear to those who consider things without prejudice.

The incense cannot be understood according to the letter, as I have shewed before, and must therefore be understood spiritually of the prayers of the faithful, of which the Mosaical incense was a type or figure: none can doubt of it that will compare Psal. cxli. 2, with Luke i. 9, 10, 13, and Rev. viii. 3, 4. These went together, and this prayer is a Christian sacrifice, Heb. xiii. 15. But the incense of Moses was annexed to the sanctuary, this to be offered in every place. "I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath

and doubting," 1 Tim. ii. 8. We may send up this perfume from our shops and closets: here every pious man is a priest, and his heart an altar.

If the incense be spiritual, so must the pure offering also; if it be taken properly, then are Christians obliged to offer meat-offerings, as the Jews did; and then it will be hard to say whether to all or some of them; for there were several sorts: and if to some, to which of them? And the words being indefinite, we shall not be able to determine what our obligation is. But this cannot be allowed; for it is expressly foretold, Dan. ix. 27, that the Messiah should cause to cease זבחה ומנחה *i. e.* all the offerings by fire whatsoever. But if taken improperly, it will be a very unfit argument to prove a proper sacrifice.

Our Saviour's words to the woman of Samaria will help us to understand these words of the Prophet: "Our fathers (said she to Jesus, John v. 20.) worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus replies, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father." And presently afterward, ver. 21, 23, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Here is the incense and pure offering; not annexed to a mountain or city, or certain place (as of old), but to be offered in every place. This is a spiritual offering, not a legal or typical one. We must worship God in spirit and truth, not according to the type and bare letter.

These spiritual services are called sacrifices both in the Old and New Testament, Psal. li. 19, and l. 14, 23, and no other sacrifices but these are required in the New Testament. There is no mention of the sacrifice of the mass. The eucharist is no where called a sacrifice, nor is the place where it was set called an altar; instead of that, the word table is used. The eucharist is called the Lord's supper, the communion, breaking of bread, but not a sacrifice. 1 Cor. x.

The Christians of old were accused by the Pagans for impiety, because they had no sacrifice. Athenagoras defends them;* he tells the heathens, that the greatest sacrifice was to know God, and that the lifting up of holy hands to him was more than an hecatomb. "What have I to do (says he) with

* Athenagor. Legat. pro Christian. [apud Justin. p. 290. Par. 1742.]

holocausts? He requires an unbloody sacrifice, and that we offer him a reasonable service." So far was he from affirming that Christians had among them any proper sacrifice.

The ancient Christians understood these words in Malachi of a spiritual sacrifice. Justin Martyr confronts Trypho the Jew* with these words of Malachi several times, opposing our Christian sacrifices to the Jewish. Tertullian produceth these words against the Jews, as a proof of the spiritual sacrifices which were to be offered up, when the carnal ones were to be rejected, *De spiritualibus vero sacrificiis addit, dicens, et omni loco sacrificia munda offerentur nomini meo, dicit Dominus.* And in his book against Marcion,† this pure offering of Malachi is explained by him by *simplex oratio de conscientia pura.* And in his third book against Marcion, he explains what is meant by incense and a pure offering, by *Gloriæ relatio et benedictio, et laus et hymni.* Cyprian,‡ quoting several passages out of the Psalms concerning spiritual sacrifices, adds Mal. i. 11. Eusebius cites these words of Malachi,§ and adds, τὸ γὰρ, &c. "What is said," says he, "in every place incense shall be offered, and a pure offering to God; what is meant but that not in Jerusalem, or any other particular place, but in every country, and in all nations, they shall offer the incense of prayers, and not by blood, but by pious works, offer unto God that which is called a pure offering." Theodoret|| expounds the incense and pure offering by the knowledge and worship of God, and applies our Saviour's words to the woman of Samaria, John iv. 21, 24, and also 1 Tim. ii. 8, to this purpose. And the same author in another place: "If (says he) the legal priesthood be at an end, and he that is after the order of Melchizedek hath offered a sacrifice, and we maintain that other sacrifices are needless, why then do the priests perform the mystical service?"¶ He answers, "that it is evident to them that are instructed in divine things, that we offer no other kind of sacrifice. Ἀλλὰ τῆς μιᾶς ἐκείνης καὶ σωτηρίου τὴν μνήμην ἐπιτελοῦμεν, i. e. We only celebrate the memory of that one saving sacrifice.** From what hath been

* Dialog. cum Tryph. advers. Judæos. [Ibid. p. 126, 137, 210.]

† Contra Marcion, lib 4. [ut supra, p. 414.]

‡ Advers. Judæos, l. 1. c. 16. [ut supra, p. 538.]

§ Demonstrat. l. 1. c. 6. [ut supra, p. 19.]

|| Theodoret in Mal. 1. [vol. 2. p. 1676. Hal. 1770.]

¶ Μυστικὴν λειτουργίαν.

** Theodoret. in Heb. viii. 4. [Ibid. vol. 3. p. 594.]

said, it appears, that the words of the prophet are no proof of the sacrifice of the mass; and that to interpret them of the spiritual services of the Christians, cannot be charged with novelty. And we may, from what hath been said, learn, that Cardinal Bellarmine had not ground sufficient to affirm, as he hath done,* “that the Fathers have always understood this place of Malachi of the sacrifice of the eucharist, and not of those good works which may be done by all.”

The next place produced by Bellarmine† as a proof of the sacrifice of the mass, is from the New Testament, *viz.* John iv. 21, 23, where Jesus, upon the woman of Samaria’s inquiry after the place of God’s public worship, said to her, “The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father:” and presently afterwards, “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” Here is no mention indeed of mass or sacrifice, nor insinuation of one or the other; and it may seem very strange, that this should be produced to the purpose in hand. I shall put together the Cardinal’s strength, and then give a distinct answer to all his pretences.

The substance of what he says is this: “That it is not unusual by worship to understand sacrifice,” and to that purpose produceth Gen. xxii. John xii. Acts viii. And “that by worship (ver. 25) is meant sacrifice, because the woman’s question (ver 20) is about sacrifice, and therefore it is reasonable to believe that our Saviour’s answer must be so also. Besides, the question was of a worship tied to a certain place, as sacrifice was, and consequently, the answer of Jesus must be understood of such a worship.” And thence he concludes, “that by true worshippers (ver. 23) are meant Christians who worship, *i.e.* sacrifice, to the Father in spirit and in truth, *i. e.* by a spiritual and true sacrifice, not carnal and typical, as the Jews did. And that the eucharist is a spiritual and true sacrifice, because effected by the Holy Ghost and the words of consecration, and is the completion of the old figures, though it be typical with respect to the sacrifice of the cross.” And because Jesus says, “The hour cometh, and now is,” he contends that he speaks of a new worship that did not obtain before, as spiritual sacrifices did, and therefore of a proper

* Bellarm. de Miss. l. 1. c. 10. [vol. 3. p. 431. Prag. 1721.]

† Bellarm. de Miss. l. 1. c. 11. [Ibid. p. 435.]

sacrifice. And that Jesus must speak of external, public, and solemn worship, as that which was to succeed to that of the Jews, which was such. For what he adds concerning the place in Malachi, as parallel to this, and speaking of a proper sacrifice, needs not to be considered here; that place in Malachi having been considered before. To these pretences I answer in the following particulars.

First, That the word worship does sometimes denote sacrifice (a great part of the Jewish worship) cannot be denied, but then it is altogether impertinent to allege it here, unless it did always do so.

Secondly, That it is very certain that the Greek word which we render worship, does not always denote sacrifice; as appears from John ix. 38. Heb. xi. 21. Rev. xxii. 8. Matth. ix. 10; the word is to be interpreted according to the subject matter.

Thirdly, That granting the woman's question to be about sacrifice, which I easily allow, yet it does not follow that our Saviour's answer must be understood in the same sense.

For, 1. It is often found otherwise. Our Saviour's words are to be interpreted in a different sense from the question put to him, and the occasion of his words. We have in this chapter several instances to this purpose. The woman speaks of common water to Jesus, when he speaks of living water to her. She in her question speaks of the water of Jacob's well, ver. 12. Jesus answers of spiritual water springing up to eternal life, ver. 14. Again, his disciples speak to Jesus of corporal food, ver. 31. He replies to them of another kind of food, ver. 32. And when they persist in their inquiry after that kind of food, our Saviour goes on still speaking of a different sort of meat, ver. 33, 34. Our Saviour takes occasion to divert men from temporal to spiritual and heavenly things, and his answers and discourses must not be thought impertinent, because they are not direct to the question propounded, or conformable to the first occasion of them. It were easy to produce several instances to this purpose. See Luke xiii. 23. John iv. 35, 36. John vi. 32, 33.

2. This argument of the Cardinal, if admitted, would prove too much. For if the worship our Saviour speaks of must be the same with that in the question of the woman, then must our Saviour's words be understood of bloody sacrifices, for the woman meant such; whereas the sacrifice of the mass is owned to be an unbloody one.

3. It is evident, that our Saviour speaks not of such a wor-

ship as the woman inquires after : for her question is of such an one as divided the Jews and Samaritans, of such as was tied to a certain place ; Jesus speaks of that wherein all Christians should agree, and which should not be affixed to one certain place. The woman inquires of worship by sacrifices ; and they were but of two sorts, *viz.* proper and carnal, of which she must be understood, or else spiritual. It is certain our Saviour does not mean the former, and therefore is to be understood of the latter : “ He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second,” Heb. x. 9.

Fourthly, That therefore the interpretation which the Cardinal gives of ver. 23 is groundless, and what he affirms (for he proves nothing) is trifling. By “ worshipping the Father,” he would have meant “ sacrificing to the Father,” and by “ in spirit and in truth,” he would have understood a spiritual and true sacrifice, and this must be the eucharist. But this is to suppose the thing in question, and not to prove it. For we deny it to be a sacrifice properly so called, we deny it to be the effect of the Holy Ghost, or to be turned into a sacrifice by the words of consecration, or the antitype of the legal sacrifices. Besides, we do not believe the Jewish sacrifices spiritual, because the Holy Spirit directed the Jews to offer them up. Nor can we believe their sacrifice of the mass to be such. It is a spiritual worship our Lord here speaks of, his words tell us so : “ They shall worship the Father in spirit,” Rom. ii. 22. Circumcision in the spirit denotes the inward circumcision in the heart, and is opposed to the outward in the flesh, and letter : and why should worship in spirit be meant of a true and proper sacrifice, as that of the mass is affirmed to be ? The Cardinal’s interpretation will, to any ingenuous and unprejudiced mind, appear very absurd and groundless.

For, 1. According to it, neither Jesus, or any of his disciples, or any other holy men, could be said to worship the Father “ in spirit and truth” till the last supper.

2. It is very improbable, that this secret of the sacrifice of the mass should be revealed to this woman ; she was a Samaritan, the eucharist not yet instituted, and she could not possibly understand what Jesus taught, if this be the meaning of the words.

3. Where there was the fairest occasion of teaching this doctrine, there is no mention of it. This there was in the Epistle to the Hebrews ; and yet the Cardinal thinks not fit to prove this doctrine from any place of that Epistle. And

though he mentions chap. xiii. 10, as a proof produced to that purpose, yet he declines to make use of it. And whereas in the mention of Melchizedek's priesthood, the author of that Epistle makes no mention of his sacrifice or oblation of bread and wine, the Cardinal pretends to give a reason of this omission, and it is this :* "Lest he should be forced to explain the mystery of the eucharist, which was too high for them." But it seems this mystery which the Jews who entertained Christianity were not able to comprehend, is here revealed by Jesus in his discourse with this woman of Samaria, though the eucharist itself was not instituted, or made known at that time.

4. It is plain, that our Saviour does not speak of the quality of the sacrifice, but of the disposition of the worshippers. "The Father seeketh such to worship him," ver. 23. "God is a Spirit;" and then it follows, "they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." The connection is close : but where would the connection be, if the Cardinal's sense were admitted? *q. d.* "God is a Spirit, and therefore there must be offered to him the sacrifice of the mass," or a proper and continual sacrifice.

Fifthly, Whereas the Cardinal would prove from those words, "the hour cometh, and now is," that Jesus speaks of a new worship that was not known before, as spiritual sacrifices of praise, &c. were, and that therefore he speaks of a sacrifice properly so called : his discourse is very inconsequent, because when the New Testament requires and commends circumcision in the heart and spirit, it does not thence follow, that such a circumcision was not required before. A spiritual worship God required of the Jews of old, when yet he required also an external and ritual one. That system of ceremonies is now destroyed, and God requires a spiritual worship free from such rites ; such spiritual worshippers he seeks, and he being a Spirit, will be worshipped in spirit. The Cardinal's argument recoils upon him. If this worship which Jesus speaks of must be something that did not obtain before, then he ought not to interpret it of a proper and propitiatory sacrifice, because such sacrifices were in use before.

Lastly, For that pretence that this worship must be of the same nature and kind with the Jewish worship, because it was to succeed it, it is so far from being good reasoning, that the

* Bellarm. de Missa, l. 1. c. 6. [Ibid. p. 422. col. 2.]

contrary may be rather inferred from it. It is certain that spiritual circumcision succeeds the carnal, and the unction with the Spirit that with oil. I might add, that the interpretation given of this place is not new. St. Chrysostom on the place gives the very same: he, by the "true worshippers," understands "spiritual," and quotes, as parallel places, Rom. i. 9, and chap. xii. 1.

The next Scripture proof of the sacrifice of the mass, produced by Cardinal Bellarmine,* is taken from the institution and first celebration of this mystery, mentioned by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, as also by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi.

This is indeed the most likely place to find something to this purpose, if there be any foundation in the holy Scripture for the sacrifice of the mass. And therefore I shall diligently consider what he hath to offer on this occasion.

He affirms, "that Christ in his last supper offered himself, under the species of bread and wine, to God the Father, and required that the Apostles and their successors should do the same to the end of the world." And this argument, could he make it good, we grant sufficient to prove the sacrifice of the mass. But how can it be proved that Christ offered himself up in the last supper, and commanded his Apostles to repeat this sacrifice? Here he refers his reader to his first, second, and third Scripture arguments, drawn from the priesthood of Melchizedek, the paschal lamb, and the blood of the covenant, Exod. xxiv. And I do also refer the reader to what hath been said before as to those pretences. He offers three other arguments: we will take them in the order in which he hath laid them before us.

The first is from those words of Christ, Luke xxii. 19, 20: "This is my body which is given for you." To which he adds those in St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 24, "which is broken for you." And, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you," and St. Matthew adds, chap. xxvi. 28, "for the remission of sins." "These words in the present tense, *is* given, *is* broken, *is* shed, do import a sacrifice given to God, not to the Apostles to eat and drink, it not being said to be given *to*, but *for* them. Besides, in St. Matthew this blood is said to be shed for many, the Apostles only being then present. The meaning is, it is given for you, and for many, and it is offered to God as a sacrifice propitiatory for remission of sins." To this I answer:

* De Missa, l. 1. c. 12. [Ibid. p. 436. col. 2.]

1. That nothing is more common in the sacred writers, than to put the present for the future tense, especially where the thing spoken of is certainly and suddenly to come to pass. It were easy to give many instances of this out of the Old and New Testament. From the Old I refer the reader to the Hebrew text of Exod. xvi. 4, 5, and chap. xvii. 6. Gen. xv. 13. In the New Testament there are many instances to this purpose: "I lay down my life for the sheep," says Jesus, John x. 15, *i. e.* I will shortly lay it down. See also ver. 17, 18: "I leave the world, and go unto the Father," says our Saviour, *i. e.* I am about to leave it, John xvi. 28. Again, he says, "And now I am no more in the world," chap. xvii. 11. *i. e.* I am about to leave it. And though he had not yet left this lower world, yet because he was about to do it, he speaks of it as come to pass already: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them," &c. ver. 12. "And now I come to thee," ver. 13. *i. e.* I am about to come. "Woman," says he, "thou art loosed from thine infirmity," Luke xiii. 12. *i. e.* thou shalt be presently loosed; for it follows, that he laid his hands on her, and after this she was "immediately made straight," ver. 13. "Whose coming is after the working of Satan," says St. Paul of the Wicked one who was not yet revealed, 2 Thess. ii. 9. with ver. 6. "For I am offered," (it is in the present tense in the Greek) says St. Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 6. *i. e.* "I am ready to be offered," as we render it well; so that there is no such force in the Cardinal's argument from the present tense; and though he thought good to make a flourish with it, yet ought he not to insist upon it.

2. Because the vulgar Latin, which the Romanists are bound not to reject, and their Canon of the Mass, read the words in the future tense, and consequently destroy all the force of his argument, and confirm our explication of the words: thus, what we render "which is shed for many," Matth. xxvi. 28, the Vulgar renders *qui pro multis effundetur*, *i. e.* "which shall be shed for many." That version does so again, Mark xiv. 24. Again, it renders in the future tense Luke xxii. 20; and what we render, 1 Cor. xi. 24, "is broken," the Vulgar renders by *tradetur*, *i. e.* "shall be delivered;" and the Canon of the Mass is conformable to the Vulgar in this matter. The Cardinal was sensible of this difficulty, and would willingly get loose from it: he finds out a compromise, and admits both readings, and that of the present tense he refers to our Lord's supper, the future to the sacrifice of the cross,

which was shortly to follow, and the sacrifice of the mass, which the Church should offer up to the end of the world. But this is but a mere invention, and that which he is so far from making any proof of, that it is nothing less than a begging of the question. If with the Vulgar, and Canon of the Mass, we read in the future, "shall be shed," *i. e.* on the cross; can it thence be inferred that it was shed in the supper? And if we read in the present, "is shed," does it follow from thence, that it must be shed on the cross also? Surely Christ died but once: and must his blood be twice shed? The mass is an unbloody sacrifice; but how can that be, if the blood were shed in the supper, and is to be shed in the mass? The vulgar Latin is to be adhered to, or not: if not, we must renounce the declaration of the Tridentine Fathers, and indeed of the Roman Church: if it be to be adhered to, where lies the fault of Protestants in understanding those words in that sense, into which that version renders them? I appeal to the conscience of any indifferent man in this case.

3. If we consider how closely the death of Christ followed upon his supper, the difficulty will be removed presently. That may be said to be done which was doing. The present time is not always strictly to be confined to a moment. Jesus was just entering upon his last sufferings, his bloody sweat and crucifixion were just at hand: no wonder his blood should be said to be shed, which was just ready to be shed: it was done on the same day with the evening of the supper. We say in common speech of a man that is just a dying, that he is a dead man; of one that is just breaking, that he is an undone man; of a victory almost obtained, that it is gained; of a prize, of which we have no hope, that it is lost.

The second argument which the Cardinal produceth to prove that Christ in his last supper offered himself a sacrifice, is from the true presence of the body and blood of Christ in that supper, which are received as the flesh and blood of a victim offered for us. This presence, he says, the Lutherans allow; and that the Calvinists would do it, did they not resist the plainest testimonies of holy writ. To which I answer:

1. That whatever the Lutherans hold, it is plain that they believe not the doctrine of the Church of Rome concerning the sacrifice of the mass, and consequently, that they cannot be supposed to hold any doctrine which manifestly infers the

sacrifice of the mass. But be that as it will, I am not concerned in that question at present.

2. That for the Calvinists' resisting the plainest testimonies of Scripture it is easily charged upon them indeed; but as it is against their avowed principles so to do upon other occasions, so it can never be made good against them in the present question. It is true, they do reject the Romanists' sense and interpretation of some Scriptures produced by them; but this is no proof that they reject the plainest evidence from those holy books. And there is no reason why the Cardinal should charge them so severely, when he, and others of the Church of Rome of great name, have owned that the corporal presence in the sacrament, as taught in their Church, or their doctrine of transubstantiation, cannot be plainly proved from any text of holy Scripture.

3. That though we believe not Christ's corporal presence in the sacrament with the Church of Rome, yet we believe him truly present to the souls of the faithful, who come prepared, and in the fruits of his death and passion. But such a real presence as this, is far from being any support to the sacrifice of the mass.

The third argument which the Cardinal produceth, being from the testimony of the Fathers, I pass by, because it is foreign to my present business. And for that reason, and that alone, I pass it by. Besides, that it is very well known, that the pretence of the Fathers' testimony in this matter hath been strictly examined by several of our learned men, to whom therefore I refer the reader.

I shall, before I dismiss this argument, shew that the institution of the Lord's Supper, as delivered to us in the Evangelists, and St. Paul, is so far from proving the Romish doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, that it overthrows it.

There is nothing in the first institution that speaks a proper sacrifice; for besides that neither in the words of institution (or any where else in all the New Testament) is the eucharist called a sacrifice; so is there no intimation of any altar on which it was offered, which is required where there is a proper sacrifice. Instead of that, it was instituted and celebrated in a guest-chamber, and at a table, and after supper:* besides, here is no visible or sensible victim, which yet Bellarmine requires in a proper sacrifice. No sense can perceive it, nor can we

* Luke xxii. 11.

believe it till we renounce our senses first. And to say that is sensible which no sense can perceive, is no better than downright nonsense. It is easy to say that Christ's body lay hid under the species of bread ; but we have no intimation of this from the institution of the Lord's Supper. Besides, this would be so far from rendering the victim visible and sensible, that it would hide it from our eyes. And whereas in a proper sacrifice, a destruction and great change of the victim is necessary ; in the last supper there is no such thing. If we believe there was, we must do it upon the bare word of the Church of Rome. There was no shadow or proof from the institution itself. Let them prove when this change was wrought, and by what action of words it was effected ; or, at least that it was wrought. If it were a proper sacrifice, the victim must be destroyed ; this the Cardinal makes an essential of a proper sacrifice : was this destruction effected when Jesus eat and drank ? or when his disciples did ? That Jesus did eat and drink at all of this supper appears not from the express words of institution in the Evangelists, and therefore cannot be urged from the institution. But supposing that he did eat and drink, he did it before those words, "This is my body," &c. and "This is my blood," &c. or afterwards. If before, then it was bread that he did eat, and wine that he drank : if afterwards, yet we find no such thing said : besides the Evangelists mention nothing between his blessing and breaking of bread, and giving it to his disciples. Nay, so far are we from receiving any proof that Jesus did eat and drink of this supper, after those words, "This is my body," &c. and "This is my blood," &c. that a man might rather conclude from St. Mark, that the disciples did drink of the cup before those words, "This is my blood," &c. were pronounced. He mentions their drinking of it first, and then our Saviour's words, "This is my blood," &c. His words are these, Mark xiv. 23, 24, "And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them ; and they all drank of it." Then it follows, "And he said unto them, This is my blood," &c. That the destruction of the victim was not effected by the eating of the Apostles, the Church of Rome cannot deny : the communicants receiving makes no change : besides, that Church, among a great many other mysteries, hath a way of celebrating the communion without communicants.

A sacrifice is given to God alone ; but in this Supper here is no oblation made to God ; what is given, is given to the

Apostles : " Jesus took bread, &c. and gave it to his disciples," Matth. xxvi. 26. " He took the cup, &c. and gave it to them," ver. 27. To them he speaks, when he says, " Take, eat." To them, when he says, " Drink ye all of it." To them, when he says, " This is my body," &c. and, " This is my blood," &c. He first bids them eat and drink, and then afterwards tells them, " This is my body," &c. and, " This is my blood," &c. Here is no mention of any sacrifice ; so far from that, that it is plain there was no such thing intended. If this were a sacrifice to God, it would not have been given to men ; they could have no share in it till God had been first served. This was against the order of things to receive that which was due to God alone, and to partake of the victim before it had been offered at the altar. We have no external rites or actions in the institutions that speak a proper sacrifice ; but the whole of it loudly speaks the contrary.

Nor will those words " This is my body," help out those of the Church of Rome. For though some of that Church make great use of those words among the ignorant sort of people, and upon occasion produce them in their writings as an argument for transubstantiation and sacrifice of the mass, yet they will not rely upon them. And if we would but consider the words strictly, we should soon find that they are so far from making for those doctrines, that they make against them. I shall go over them with great brevity, and then let the reader judge whether they are a proof of those doctrines or not. I begin with

This. If by *this* be meant " this bread," here will be no strength to be had from it for supporting those doctrines of the Church of Rome. And by *this* must be meant Christ's body, or bread, or nothing at all. To say that by *this* Christ meant his body, is to suppose him to say that his body is his body ; but if he said that this bread was his body, then is not our Protestant interpretation of the words to be rejected, nor the sense of the Romanists to be admitted. And that by *this* our Saviour meant " This bread" is infinitely plain to any that are unprejudiced. What did he take ? The text tells us* that he " took bread ;" what he took he also blessed and brake, and gave ; of this he said, " Take, eat," and then adds, " This is my body." This will be put out of doubt, if by the following *this*, in those words, " This is my blood," by *this* be meant " this cup," no reason can be assigned why *this* (Matth.

* Matth. xxvi. 26. with ver. 28.

xxvi. 26.) should not denote "this bread," if *this* (ver. 28.) denote "this cup." It is true St. Matthew and St. Mark, having mentioned the cup which Jesus took and blessed, and gave, tell us that Jesus said, "This is my blood."* And though it be plain from what goes before, that by *this*, is meant "this cup," yet we have further proof of it still. For whereas St. Matthew and St. Mark say only *this*, St. Luke and St. Paul say "this cup." And having this warrant by *this* in the latter words to understand "this cup," where lies the blame, when by *this* in the former we understand "this bread?" I proceed :

Is. This verb is interpretable according to the subject matter ; but where it is used of a sacrament, and enjoins the sign and thing signified together, and where another sense contended for is destructive to our senses and against reason and other Scripture, it is reasonable to understand it to import the same with the word *signifieth* ; and that is the present case. Nor is there any more common than this way of speaking in the holy Scriptures, in other authors, and common conversation. This verb here cannot be understood in the sense of the Church of Rome, as implying transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass ; because that change of substance they speak of is not effected till these words, "This is my body," are fully pronounced ; and therefore this not being effected till the last syllable be pronounced (according to our adversaries), it cannot be said to *be* before it hath received its *being*. The pronunciation of the words must be precedent to the being of the thing ; and therefore cannot be true before they are fully pronounced. According to our adversaries, the real presence of Christ in the sacrament (which they contend for) must be the cause and effect of the truth of this proposition, "This is my body." If their doctrine be not true, the proposition is false in the sense they take it in. Again, if their doctrine be true, the proposition pronounced by a priest makes it so. And whereas elsewhere the existence of a thing makes good the proposition ; here the proposition makes good the thing.

My body. By his body, our Lord must mean what was known to be so, and what had the properties of a human body. The disciples† were gross, and apt enough to take spiritual things in a carnal sense when the letter gave them any occasion

* Matth. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. with Luke xxii. 20. and 1 Cor. x. 16. and chap. xi. 26, 27, 28.

† Matth. xvi. 6, 11, 12. John iv. 32, 33.

so to do. They had not so quick an apprehension as to conquer all the difficulties of the Romish doctrine. They could not comprehend the miracles said to be wrought by the words of consecration. They were not easily convinced that Christ was risen from the dead, even after many proofs of it, and predictions to that purpose. It is not to be imagined that they would eat human flesh, and drink blood; and believe Jesus sacrificed, and alive at the same time; at the same entire, and yet consumed; and eaten entirely by each of them, and in every the least crumb of bread that was taken.

The next place produced by Cardinal Bellarmine for proof of the doctrine of the Church of Rome concerning the sacrifice of the mass, is Acts xiii. 2: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said," &c. where by *ministering* must be meant *sacrificing*, and that must be understood of the sacrifice of the mass. I shall, before I sum up what the Cardinal produceth from hence for proof of the doctrine of the Roman Church in this matter, lay before the reader the annotation of the Rhemists upon these words. And their words are these: "If we should, as our adversaries do, boldly turn what text we list, and flee from one language to another for the advantage of our cause, we might have translated *ministering*, *sacrificing*; for so the Greek doth signify, and so Erasmus translated. Yea, we might have translated, *saying mass*; for so they did. And the Greek Fathers hereof had their name *Liturgy*, which Erasmus translateth *mass*; saying, *Missa Chrysostomi*. But we keep our text, as the translators of the Scriptures should do, most religiously." I was much surprised when I first read this annotation: for it is so far from proving what it is produced for, that it is inconsistent with itself, and is an argument of a bad cause. For I would fain know what harm there is in fleeing from one language to another for the advantage of our cause, whilst we flee from a translation to the original text? I would know for what reason he can be charged with "boldly turning the text as he listeth," who should turn it into what it really signifies, and in that place? If the Greek word signify *sacrificing* and *saying mass*, why might they not have termed it so? Had it been a fault to have translated truly? Erasmus did well in his version, or he did amiss. If he did amiss, to what purpose is his authority produced here? If he did well, why should they fear to do like him? If this text proves the sacrifice of the mass, it does so either as we have it in the vulgar Latin, or as it is in

the Greek. The Vulgar renders the word as we do, *ministering*, and that is so far from denoting the sacrifice of the mass that it does not so much as insinuate any sacrifice at all. If it have any force then for proving their doctrine, it must be from the Greek; and these men lay it there: but then I would know if they do not flee from one language to another for the advantage of their cause? And then they blame what themselves practise; and their meaning must be this, that they would not have us flee from one language to another, though they do it in the mean time. These men pretend indeed great religion and sanctity. "We keep our text," say they, "as the translators of the Scriptures should do, most religiously." If by keeping the text they mean the vulgar Latin, much good may it do them: let them keep here as close to it as they can; if they do they will never find any proof of the sacrifice of the mass. There are others of the Church of Rome, who, it seems, have not kept to the text religiously, as these pretend to do. Erasmus could not say he did it when he used the word *sacrificing*. Menochius the Jesuit* did not keep the text when he interprets the Greek word by *sacrificantibus*. And the publishers of the Mons Testament† did boldly turn as they list, and flee from one language to another for the advantage of their cause, when they render "as they sacrificed."

But I return to Cardinal Bellarmine,‡ and sum up what he hath to say from this text for the proof of the sacrifice of the mass. And thus it is: that the ministry or service exhibited to the Lord here,§ "does not seem possible to be any thing else than a sacrifice, and the sacrifice of the mass," and that because there is this sacrifice in the Church, or there is none at all. He endeavours to confirm what he says, 1. "From the Greek word, which," he says, "is granted to import a public (not private) ministry, and therefore an external. Nor can it signify the ministry of the word and sacraments, because that service, though public, yet is not performed unto God, to whom we neither preach, nor dispense the sacraments. For though these things be said to be for the honour of God, yet if for that reason St. Luke had thus expressed himself, he would not have added, 'and fasted.' For fasting in that

* Menoch. in Act. xiii. 2.

† Qu'ils sacrifiant. Nov. Test. à Mons 1672.

‡ Bellarm. de Sacr. Miss. l. 1. c. 13. [vol. 3. p. 439. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

§ Non videtur aliud esse potuisse quam Sacrificium et Sacrificium Missæ.

sense, 'is for the honour of God,' Rom. xiv. 6." 2. Because the Greek word *Λειτουργέω*, though it may be accommodated to sacred and profane services, yet when it is applied to sacred, and absolutely used in the Scriptures, it is always taken for the service rendered by sacrifice. For proof of this he refers the reader to Luke i. and Heb. xi. 8, 9, 10. To this he adds the version of Erasmus, and that the Greeks call the celebration of the mass *Λειτουργίαν*.

Before I answer these pretences of the Cardinal's, I shall premise two things.

First, That the Cardinal is not of the mind with the Rhemists; he thinks it very convenient to "flee from one language to another for the advantage of his cause." He lays not the stress upon the Latin, but Greek word, to which he shewed much greater judgment than is to be found in the Rhenish annotation.

Secondly, As to the importance of the Greek word, there is a great difference between the Rhemists and the Cardinal. They say they might have translated the Greek word "sacrificing," or "saying mass." The first, they say, the word signifies; the latter was practised here. But who told them that the Greek word signifies "to sacrifice?" Their vulgar Latin renders it by "ministering."* It would have been some support to their cause, or they would have thought it so, had it been in that ancient version rendered by sacrificing. To pretend that the Greek word signifies "to sacrifice," is an argument of great impudence or ignorance. We have another account† from those who well understand this matter. They tell us that it signifies "to toil," and "to serve," and denotes some public ministry or service.‡ But Cardinal Bellarmine hath more modesty and learning than to pretend to affirm, that the word signifies "to sacrifice." That it imports a public ministry or service, he and we are agreed in. He says of Erasmus *vertere ausus est*, that he was so hardy as to turn the Greek word by the Latin signifying sacrificing. But he commends him not for it, and mentions it as an argument *ad hominem*, against those men who had an esteem for him. I now proceed to answer the Cardinal.

First, There is no need that we understand this ministering of a proper sacrifice, or else of the ministry of the word and

* Ministrantibus autem illis V. L.

† *Λειτουργεῖν, μοχθεῖν, δουλεύειν.* Hesychius.

‡ *Λειτουργία κυρίως, ἡ δημοσία ὑπηρεσία.* Suid.

sacraments, because it may be understood of the public prayers of the Church. Thus the Syriac version does. And prayer and fasting are often joined together : and in the very next words it is said, "And when they had fasted and prayed," &c. (ver. 3). Prayers are offered to God ; and, admitting this sense, the Cardinal's way of arguing is spoiled. For though we do not preach, or minister the sacraments to God, yet we offer our prayers to him.

Secondly, That preaching the word, however, is not by this excluded : it may well be called "ministering to the Lord." He that does it, exercises his charge and functions, and helps to prepare and make ready a people for the Lord.* Both Chrysostom and Theophylact, on this place, expound what we render "ministering," by "preaching." And Cardinal Cajetan upon the place,† speaks to the same purpose : "The kind of ministry is not explained," says he, "but because doctors and prophets are mentioned, it is insinuated that they ministered to the Lord, *docendo et prophetando*, i. e. by teaching and prophesying."

Thirdly, That for the import of the Greek word, we are contented to be determined by the Scripture use of it in the Old Testament, where the LXXII. make use of it, and in the New. In the New Testament it is far from being restrained to sacrificing : their vulgar Latin, as hath been observed, renders it by *ministrantibus*, i. e. ministering in this place. And elsewhere it represents the ministry of princes, Rom. xiii. 6, and that of angels, Heb. i. 14, and that of almsgiving to the poor, (which is but improperly a sacrifice,) 2 Cor. ix. 12. And when it is applied to sacrifice, it appears from the subject matter so to be. For the Old Testament, it is by the LXXII. made use of frequently, and it is used to interpret the Hebrew עֲבָדָה, which signifies "service" or "ministry" in general, and is accordingly rendered by the vulgar Latin *ministerium et officium*. And it is so far from being restrained to the office of sacrificing priests, that it is used very commonly and frequently to express the office or ministry of the Levites. For the truth of which I refer the reader to the following texts in the LXXII. interpreters : Numb. iv. 24, 28, and vii. 5, and viii. 22, 25, and xvi. 9, and xviii. 6. 1 Chron. vi. 32.

Fourthly, Nor is there any shadow for understanding this place

* Τί ἐστὶ λειτουργούντων· τουτέστι κηρυττόντων.

† Cajetan. in Act. xiii. 2.

of a proper sacrifice. Here is no mention of sacrificing priests, but express mention of prophets and doctors. They are said to be ministering to the Lord, or to Christ, as it is probable the words import : but that sense will not agree with offering to him the sacrifice of himself. The fasting also that follows agrees well with prayer, but not with a proper sacrifice, which was generally attended with a feast or banquet upon it.

The next argument from Scripture for the sacrifice of the mass, produced by Cardinal Bellarmine,* is taken from 1 Cor. x. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 : “ Flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men : judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ? For we being many, are one bread, and one body : for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh : are not they which eat of the sacrifice, partakers of the altar ? What say I then ? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing ? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not unto God : and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils : ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils.” From these words Bellarmine collects three arguments for the sacrifice of the mass.

First, From this, that St. Paul compares the Lord’s table with the altars of the Gentiles and of the Jews ; whence he infers, that the Lord’s table is an altar, and consequently that the eucharist is a sacrifice.

Secondly, Because the Apostle compares the eucharist with the sacrifices of the heathens, and of the Jews, and thence he infers that the eucharist must be a sacrifice.

Thirdly, Because he compares the union of them who receive the eucharist with that communion which the Gentiles have with their idols in partaking with their altars, whence he infers that the eucharist must be a sacrifice.

To this I answer :

First, That St. Paul does not compare the Lord’s table with the altars, but with the tables of the Jews and of the heathens, where they did eat the remainder of the sacrifices which were offered at the altar. It is certain that the Jews had but one altar for sacrifices, and that not built after a table fashion,

* De Missa, l. 1. c. 14. [ut supra, col. 2.]

and so placed that the Jewish people might not be admitted to eat upon it. And for the Gentiles, it is certain that St. Paul speaks here of the tables on which they eat the remainder of their sacrifices: "Ye cannot," says he, "be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."* This Lord's table is no where called an altar, nor the eucharist a sacrifice, in any part of Scripture. And though Haymo, and other grave authors, think the Lord's table called an altar,† yet the Cardinal is so wise as not to urge it, as he tells us, when he mentions their opinion. And though it should be compared with an altar, it follows not hence that it was an altar, no more than it follows that the Gospel is leaven, or the Church a woman, or Jesus a vine, because compared with such things.

Secondly, For the second comparison between the eucharist with the sacrifice of the Jews and Gentiles, it will not serve the Cardinal's purpose. For be it so, that we receive from the Lord's table the body and blood of Christ, as the Jews received their victims, and the heathens their *idolothyta* from their altars or tables, this will not infer the sacrifice of the mass. It is confessed, that they that eat the eucharist have communion with the body and blood of Christ, as those Jews who did eat the sacrifice did partake of the altar, and the heathens that did eat the *idolothyta* had communion with devils? But shall we conclude from hence, that the Jews did eat up the altar, and the pagans did eat up the devils? For so we may, as well as we do infer, that Christians sacrifice the very body of Christ, because the bread which we break is said to be the "communion," or "communication of the body of Christ."

Thirdly, That allowing that St. Paul compares the communion we have with Christ by the eucharist, with the communion the heathens had with devils, by eating the *idolothyta*, it follows not thence that the eucharist is a sacrifice in that sense which the Romanists contend for: this should have been proved by the Cardinal.

Upon the whole matter, these words of St. Paul are so far from proving the sacrifice of the mass, as taught in the Romish Church, that they afford arguments against it, *viz.*

1. Be it that the communion the faithful have with God in the eucharist, be compared with that communion which the Jews have with the altar, and the heathens with devils; this will be so far from proving the Romish doctrine of the sacrifice

* 1 Cor. x. 21.

† Heb. xiii. 10.

of the mass, that it makes against it. For with the same reason the Cardinal does from this comparison conclude the eucharist to be a sacrifice, I may infer also, that it is not a proper one, and that the natural flesh and blood are not in it. The other communions with the altar and with devils, are not to be understood corporeally and substantially : and why then should the communion of Christ's body and blood be understood in so gross a sense ? The Jew that partook of the altar, did not eat the very altar ; the heathen that eat the idolothyta, with conscience of the idol, had fellowship with the devil : but this is still to be understood in a moral and spiritual sense. The Jew received of the benefits of the altar, and did, by his partaking, declare himself of the Jewish religion. The heathen did also by partaking, do an act of worship, and thereby acknowledge himself a worshipper of the devil. And he that eats the eucharist, does thereby profess himself a Christian, and reap the benefits of Christ's death and sufferings.

2. The eating of the eucharist is expressed by partaking of the bread, ver. 17. That expression makes against the Romish doctrine, which teacheth that the natural substance is changed : besides, that in the other manducations there is no transubstantiation ; none where the Jew is said, when he did eat the sacrifice, to partake of the altar ; nor yet when the heathen is said to have fellowship with devils, when he partakes of their tables. And therefore there is no reason that we should here fancy a transubstantiation, nor consequently the sacrifice of the mass.

It is expressly said, that what we eat and drink in the eucharist, is bread and wine ; and if it be so, this destroys the Romish doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass. In the institution our Lord is said to have taken bread, &c. Hence the eucharist is expressed by the breaking of bread, Acts ii. 42, 46 ; chap. xx. 7. And in this chapter it is so called three times, ver. 16, 17, and in the following it is so called three times, 1 Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28, and, which is very remarkable, when the Apostle reproves their irreverent and indevout partaking of the eucharist, and where he had the fairest occasion of acquainting them with the mystery of transubstantiation, had that doctrine been true. Once indeed our Saviour said, " This is my body," and but once : but it is expressly called bread nine or ten times. " The bread which we break," says St. Paul. The natural body of Christ is not broken ; and to interpret breaking by immolation, is without authority and

reason. It is bread still if we believe our sense, or the Scripture, where it is frequently so called after consecration, and where we are said to partake "of that one bread," ver. 17, and to eat "this bread," 1 Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28.

3. It appears that the Apostle here does not compare the eucharist with the Jewish or Gentile sacrifices (upon which supposition the Cardinal grounds his second argument), but with the feasts or banquets which they made upon the remainder of the sacrifice. Hence it is, that he calls it the Lord's table, not altar; and the table, not altar of devils, ver. 21. The sacrifice was offered by a priest, and upon an altar; the feast upon it was eaten by the people, and on a table. The Corinthians knew it was not lawful to sacrifice to devils; all the question was, whether they might not eat of the remainder of those sacrifices. The Apostle here dissuades them from it, from the eucharist and the relation that hath to our Lord Jesus Christ, that from that they might judge of the relation which the table of devils hath to devils. Hence they might learn, that as they who partake of the Lord's table have fellowship with Christ, so they who partake of the devil's table, have fellowship with devils.

He also makes use of another argument, and that was a parallel rite among the Jews:* "Behold Israel after the flesh, are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" For the more fully comprehending this whole matter, it is to be considered to my present purpose, that among the Jews there were three sorts of sacrifices.

First, Some which no man was permitted to eat any part of: such were the holocaust, and those sin-offerings, the blood whereof was to be carried into the holy place.† The fat, kidneys, and cawl of these were burnt on the altar of brass, the skin and flesh without the camp, and when the temple was built, without the city. These were types of Christ, who suffered without the gate. The adherers to that law, all the legal eaters,‡ are excluded from partaking of him according to the principles of their own law; the people not being permitted to partake of such sacrifices.

Secondly, Some the priests did only eat of,§ and that they

* Levit. i. 9. 1 Sam. vii. 9.

† Levit. i. 5. chap. vi. 30. chap. x. [19]. chap. xvi. 27.

‡ Heb. xiii. 10.

§ Levit. vi. 26. chap. x. 17. chap. vii. 6.

were not permitted to do every where, but in an holy place. These sacrifices were called most holy.

Thirdly, Some were less holy : these the priests were not only permitted to eat of, but their children and servants, and the offerers were also permitted to eat part of them too ; such were the peace-offerings :* these were sometimes to be eaten the same day they were offered ; and therefore not to be eaten by the offerer alone,† but by him and his friends or kindred, or whomsoever of the same religion he thought fit to invite to the feast or banquet, which was made of the remainder of the sacrifice.‡ This eating part of the sacrifice is frequently mentioned as a rite belonging to that service, and an acknowledgment of that religion which was professed where that rite obtained. *Exod. xxxiv. 15. Numb. xxv. 2. Psal. cvi. 28. Exod. xviii. 12, and chap. xxxii. 1 Sam. iii.* Of the remainders of these sacrifices the Apostle must be understood, *ver. 18.* The people were admitted to no other : it was never lawful for them to sacrifice : what they eat was no more but a feast upon a sacrifice. This which they were admitted to eat, they did not offer anew to God : it was a meal or feast, a portion allowed them out of what they had brought. This will be far enough from proving the sacrifice of the mass, though it helps us to understand the nature of the eucharist, as it is a feast upon a sacrifice, and the efficacy of the sacrifice of the cross, of which the eucharist is the memorial.

Moses required expiatory sacrifices, interdicted the offerer to eat any part of it, and forbade blood to all Israel. This spake the imperfection of these sacrifices, and that they were not to be relied upon ; they were consumed on the altar to the Divine justice and will, no portion was allowed to the offerer as a token of God's favour. They had not so much efficacy with God ; it is otherwise now. The sacrifice of the cross hath made abundant atonement, and satisfied the Divine justice : we are allowed to feast upon this precious victim, and to rejoice in the saving virtue of Christ's death. The legal offerer brought his sacrifice, imparted his crime to it, it died in his stead. This was all he had to do with it. It came not back from the altar : he ate no part of it. He imparted death to the beast, that imparted not life nor nourishment to

* *Levit. xxii. 10, 11. chap. x. 14.*

† *Deut. xxvii. 7. 1 Sam. xi. 15. chap. i. 4.*

‡ *Levit. vii. 15, and xxii. 29.*

him back again. Our Lord made expiation by his death, and gives us spiritual nourishment in his holy sacrament. But then to suppose him offered again, is to suppose him to suffer more than once, and consequently to deny the sufficiency of the sacrifice he offered on the cross.

From what hath been said, the unprejudiced reader, and sincere lover of truth, will easily discern, that the Scriptures will afford no proof for the doctrine of the Roman Church concerning the sacrifice of the mass.

BOOK III.

THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF ROME JUSTLY CON-
DEMNED, AS DIRECTING PRAYERS IN AN UNKNOWN
TONGUE.

A DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE CELEBRATION OF

DIVINE SERVICE IN AN UNKNOWN TONGUE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

CARDINAL HOSIUS ; Sanders ; Epist. Cler. Gall. Extract.
ex Regist. Fac. Par. Procez. &c. quoted in this Tract by the
page, refer to a book, called "*Collectio quorundam gravium
Authorum, qui Sacræ Scripturæ aut Divinorum Officiorum in
vulgarem Linguam Translationes damnarunt,*" &c. Printed
at Paris, 1661.

The quotation, though out of Sixtus Senensis, are the
words of Ambrosius Compsa, who severely condemning Cajetan
for saying, "It is better," &c. gives this as a reason, "that that
opinion *primo a Diabolo inventa est.*"

UPON this argument the Church of England* doth fully
declare itself in these words, "It is a thing plainly repugnant
to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church,
to have public prayers in the Church, or to minister the
sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people."

But if we consult the doctors of the Church of Rome about
it, we shall find them, as in most other points, differing

* Article 24.

extremely among themselves. Mercer,* a very learned person, and professor of Hebrew at Paris, is so free as to say, "*Temere fecerunt, &c.* They amongst us have done rashly, that brought in the custom of praying in an unknown tongue, which very often neither they themselves, nor our people understand." And Cardinal Cajetan saith,† "*Melius est, &c.* It is better for our Church, that the public prayers in the congregation be said in a tongue common to the priest and people, and not in Latin." Others of them are of another mind, and say, the having divine service in a tongue known to the people, is new and profane,‡ and the doctrine requiring it "*Diaboli calliditatem sapit*, smells of the craft of the devil."§ And that the Church, in making use of the Latin tongue therein, "received it by inspiration from the Holy Ghost," as a late author saith.||

With what consistence soever the former sort may speak to truth and reason; yet I am sure the latter speak with consistence enough to the opinion, declarations and practice of their Church, as is evident from the Council of Trent,¶ the present standard of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, which I find thus Englished to my hands by a noted person of their Church:** "Though the mass contain (great) instruction for God's faithful people, yet it seemed not expedient to the Fathers (of the Council) that it should be celebrated everywhere in the vulgar tongue: wherefore retaining in all Churches the ancient rite (or rather, in all places the ancient rite of every Church††), approved by the holy Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all Churches; lest Christ's sheep should hunger, and the children asking bread, none should be found to break it to them, the holy Synod commands pastors and all that have care of souls, that during the celebration of mass, they should frequently either by themselves, or others, expound some part of those things which are read in it; and among other things, let them explain the mystery of the most

* Comment. in Eccles. 5. 2.

† In 1 Ep. Corinth. c. 14.

‡ Stapleton. Quæst. quodl. Quæst. 2.

§ Sixtus Senensis Biblioth. l. 6. annot. 263. [vol. 2. p. 413. Venet. 1574.]

|| Portraiture of the Church of Jesus Christ.

¶ Concil. Trid. Sess. 22. c. 8. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 854, 855. Lut. Par. 1672.]

** S. C. Answ. to Dr. Peirce, c. 15.

†† Retento ubique cujusque Ecclesiæ antiquo ritu. [Ibid. p. 855.]

holy sacrifice, (the words are, ‘some mystery of this holy sacrifice’*) especially on Sundays and feasts.”

And they conclude,† “If any one shall say, that mass ought to be celebrated only in the vulgar tongue, let him be anathema.”

To this I shall add for a conclusion, the judgment of the late Pope Alexander VII. in a brief‡ he sent to the clergy of France about a translation of the Missal into that language, at that time newly published; in which he saith, that “some sons of perdition had arrived to that madness, as to translate and publish it, &c. A novelty we abhor and detest, as the seed-plot of disobedience, rashness, sedition, and schism, and of many other evils, and therefore that French Missal, or what shall hereafter be published in any other manner, we condemn, reprobate, and forbid.”

From all which we may perceive, what an evident repugnancy there is betwixt the doctrine of the Church of England and that of Rome, in the matter before us: and therefore for the better understanding the case, and discerning which is in the right, and which in the wrong, I shall discourse of it in the following order.

First, I shall consider the phrase *an unknown tongue*.

Secondly, I shall inquire into the lawfulness and expediency of celebrating divine service in a tongue not understood by the people. For so much is affirmed by the Council of Trent, and denied by the Church of England.

Thirdly, I shall inquire, whether the celebrating service in a tongue not understood by the people, hath been the ancient custom of every Church? For so much also is affirmed by that Council, and denied by the Church of England.

Fourthly, I shall consider, whether the provision made by the foresaid Council, of having some part of the mass expounded, be sufficient to countervail the mischief of having the whole in a tongue not understood by the people, and to excuse that Church in their injunction of it?

Fifthly, I shall inquire, whether upon the whole, the public service of God ought not to be celebrated in a tongue vulgarly understood? Which proposition whosoever holds, is anathematized by the foresaid Council: and yet is owned by the Church of England.

* Sanctissimi hujus sacrificii aliquod mysterium. [Ibid.]

† Canon. 9. [Ibid. p. 856.]

‡ Collectio quorundam Author, &c. cum Decretis, &c. [Par.] 1661.

SECT I.

Of the phrase, Service in an Unknown Tongue.

Towards the fixing the sense of this phrase, we are to observe,

I. That there is the vulgar tongue of a country, which is universally understood by the natives of what rank or quality soever. Such was the Latin tongue formerly in Rome; such now is English with us.

Before we dismiss this, it is to be further considered :

1. That there are different dialects or ways of expressing and pronouncing the same tongue : which differences of words or pronunciation do not so alter the tongue, but that throughout under all these variations it agrees in much more than it differs ; so that he that speaks the one, is generally understood by him that useth the other. Such anciently were the different dialects of the Greek tongue, well known to the learned : and such are the northern, southern, and western ways of speaking among ourselves in this nation.

2. Where there are these different dialects, there generally is one way of speaking, which either from the eloquence or fashionableness of it, so far prevails, as to be the standard of the tongue, and to be used in writing books, letters, &c. and is understood by all. Such I conceive was anciently that which is called the common dialect in Greek : and of the like kind is that which is spoken in and about the court, and by scholars and persons of a liberal education amongst us, and elsewhere.

3. If a tongue in process of time, by a mixture of other nations, or by the removal of a people from one country to another, or by any other cause comes to be so altered, as the mother and original tongue is not to be understood (as Ledesma saith it is in Spain),* then it is no longer a vulgar tongue, but it is to be reckoned amongst the unknown.

II. There is a common tongue, which though not the mother or national tongue, is however with that commonly and generally understood.

Thus it was anciently in many places with the Greek and Latin. The former of which was the common tongue of a great part of the then known world, and continued so to be

* De Script. Div. et Missæ sacr. celebr. ling. vulg. c. 20. n. 5.

from the time of Cicero, to that of St. Jerome,* for the space, that is, of four hundred, if not five hundred years ; insomuch that not only the Scriptures were read in Greek in the public congregations, from Egypt to Constantinople, as St. Jerome informs us ; but the Christians also had their worship, as is confessed,† and the Fathers preached to them in that language. So did St. Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Cyril, and St. Athanasius, in their several sees of Antioch, Cæsarea, Jerusalem, and Alexandria.

And the Latin was so well known, understood, and commonly spoken, together with the vulgar tongue, in divers countries,‡ through the industry of the Romans in their several provinces,§ that the vulgar was scarcely more. Thus we find it in the proconsular Africa, where, though less accurately spoken than at Rome, it was so well understood, that St. Austin saith,|| he learned that language of his nurse, and at play, and did write as well as preach in it for the use of the vulgar ; and calls it “ our speech,” whereas the Punic was the vulgar tongue of that country.

And such a common tongue is French in Flanders, *Lingua Franca* in the Straits, and English in some parts of Wales.

III. There is a learned tongue, which though common amongst the learned, yet they being few in comparison of the vulgar, that understand it not, it cannot be called a common tongue ; such are Greek and Latin now.

IV. There is a tongue understood and spoken by none in a nation, or so few, as are next to none : and which if used in divine offices would be wholly unintelligible ; such are Persic and Indian with us.

The use of all this niceness is partly to clear the state of the question, and partly to prevent many of the objections which the case is cumbered with ; and without the observing of which, the dispute will be turned from the point that is controverted, to that which is not. As it happens for the most part among those of the Church of Rome that undertake the management

* Cic. pro Archia. Hieron. tom. 9. l. 2. proœm. ad Galat. [vol. 7. p. 427, 428, Veron. 1757.] tom. 3. Præf. l. in paralip.

† Ledesma, c. 33.

‡ L. Valla Eleg. præf.

§ Ledesma, c. 3. n. 7.

|| L. 1. confess. c. 14. [vol. 1. p. 78. Par. 1679.] Retract. l. 1. c. 20. [Ibid. p. 31.] In Psal. 138. De Verb. Apostol. Serm. 24. [Ibid. vol. 5. p. 804.] De Doctr. Christ. l. 2. c. 14. [Ibid. vol. 3. par. 1. p. 27.]

of this cause ; who do either distinguish where they are not to distinguish, or do not distinguish where they should distinguish. For sometimes they oppose the dialects of a tongue to that tongue of which they are the dialects : at other times they oppose the common tongue to the vulgar : sometimes they confound the learned tongue with the common ; and then again oppose the learned and utterly unknown, as if these two were of as different kinds as known and unknown.

To give an instance of each of these.

Do they undertake to shew* how unfit and unreasonable it is to translate the Service or Scriptures into a vulgar tongue ? they endeavour to make it out, by shewing how unfit it is to think of translating, and how unreasonable it is to expect they should be translated into the several dialects of each tongue ? Would they farther shew that the Divine Offices, &c. were not of old so translated ? they attempt to prove it from their not having been translated into different dialects. As if the dialects of a tongue differed as much from each other, and all from the main tongue of a nation, as a learned tongue differs from the vulgar. Which is (to speak charitably) for want of observing, that the dialects are but several modes of speaking the same tongue ; and that ordinarily there is some common standard, which, as I have said, overrules the rest, and is a guide common to all : as here in England, notwithstanding there be several dialects, and that there is one in Scotland differs much from them all ; yet there is but one translation of the Bible, and one service for the use of the whole, and that is fully if not equally understood by all.

Furthermore, would they prove, that anciently the Christian Churches used not a vulgar† tongue in divine service ? they presently multiply authorities to shew, that in many places they used Greek and Latin,‡ and that Greek and Latin were oftentimes not the vulgar tongues where they were so used. As if the common tongue (for such were often those two in elder times, where they were not the vulgar) was opposed to the vulgar, as much as unknown is to known ; and each was inconsistent with the other. Thus they tell us of St. Jerome,§ “That the vulgar tongue in Galatia was in effect the same

* Ledesma, c. 9. n. 4, 5, 9. c. 20. n. 2. Sanders Orat. de Ling. Offic. Eccl.

† Ledesma, c. 9. n. 6.

‡ Lizettus, l. SS. in vulg. non vert. p. 51. [Lugd. 1552.]

§ Bellarm. de Verbo, l. 2. c. 15. [vol. 1. p. 65. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

with that of the Treviri in Germany. And yet there, and in the neighbouring countries, they had the Scriptures, if not their divine service, in Greek." Not observing that Greek was the common tongue of those parts, and that both that and a vulgar were there freely and generally spoken; as Greek and Latin, as well as the Gallic tongues, were so frequent in Massilia, that it was called *trilinguis*, as St. Jerome shews in the same Dissertation of his. So that these two, the common and vulgar, are so far from being inconsistent, that (notwithstanding the bold saying of our countryman Sanders,* "that the common people understand nothing but their mother tongue"), the experience of all ages, as well as our own, shews that they are frequently met together.

But to proceed. Would they demonstrate that they do and may lawfully use the Latin now in divine service? they attempt with great industry to prove† that both that and the Greek were anciently used therein. And so they confound the learned and the common tongue, and compare those times and places, in which the Latin and Greek were commonly known and understood, with our times and places, in which neither of them are understood, but by the learned.

Lastly, Would they shew that St. Paul, (in 1 Cor. xiv.) doth not oppose service in Latin,‡ they undertake to shew,§ that he opposeth no other service than what is altogether unknown, and nobody understands, as Persic and Arabic, and that he doth not condemn a learned tongue; thereby supposing the learned tongue, and tongue altogether unknown, to be different in kind; whereas they only differ so, that the one is rarely understood, and by very few, in comparison, and the other is understood by none.

Now in all this they say little or nothing to the purpose. For if they plead for their Latin service, as Greek was in Galatia, and Latin in Africa, who is their adversary? For these tongues were, as I have shewed, in those and the like places, as well or little less spoken and understood than the vulgar and mother tongues. And the Protestants do not think it unlawful to have the common service in a tongue which is commonly understood (though it be not the vulgar tongue of the nation) especially in maritime and provincial

* Orat. ut antea.

† Ledesma c. 9. n. 1. c. 27. n. 9.

‡ Ledesma, c. 27. n. 9.

§ Sanders Orat. Bellarm. de Verb. l. 2. c. 16.

countries, where there is a concourse of divers nations, and where either these several languages are understood, or there is a compound language that serves for all, as the *Lingua Franca* before spoken of.

But if they plead for Latin, as it is now (when a dead and learned tongue), that is, where it is not known at all, as in the West Indies, where yet it is as much used by those of the Roman communion in mass, as in Europe; or where it is not known to the vulgar people, as it is with us, and every where else, then they speak to the purpose, for that the Reformed do oppose; but then the way of arguing hitherto taken notice of, is of no use to them in the world; and is no more to the purpose, than if they would undertake to prove that there is at this day a famous university at Athens, and that Latin is the vulgar tongue now at Rome, because these were so formerly.

So that if we will know where the controversy lies, and what is contended for and against, we must restore things to their proper places; and I think all may be brought to an issue, by putting and resolving this plain question, viz.

SECT. II.

Quest. Whether it be lawful and expedient to use such a tongue in the public worship of God, as is not vulgarly or commonly understood by the people, according to the way at this day required and practised in the Church of Rome?

If we would inquire into the lawfulness of such things as appertain to divine worship, we must apply ourselves to the holy Scripture; being in matters of that nature to determine of right and wrong, lawful and unlawful, according to the directions, commands, and prohibitions of it. If we would be satisfied about their expedience, we must consider the nature, ends, and use of what we inquire about. This therefore is a proper method for the resolution of the foregoing question: but because the Apostle (in his Discourse upon this subject, 1 Cor. xiv.) doth argue from the ends and use of the several offices belonging to divine worship, and because the like order may give some light and force to what follows; I shall first of all,

I. *Treat of the ends for which divine worship, and the several offices of it, were instituted.*

II. *Consider whether those ends may be attained, when the worship is performed in a tongue not understood.*

III. *Whether the worship so performed as to leave those ends unattainable, will be accepted by God.*

IV. *I shall consider the Apostle's discourse upon this argument; and whether it can be reasonably concluded from thence, that divine worship so administered as not to be understood of the people, is unlawful.*

I. In the first of these, the masters of controversy in the Romish Church do proceed with great tenderness and no little obscurity. For would we know what the worship is they would have in an unknown tongue? they answer, it is the public only they defend.

For as for private, saith one,* "it is lawful for every man to offer up his lesser prayers to God, in what tongue soever he pleaseth." And saith another,† "All Catholics are taught to say their private prayers in their mother tongue."

As if it were possible to assign such a vast difference betwixt them (when the dispositions, reasons and ends, required and intended, are the same), that what is lawful, expedient and necessary in the one, is unlawful, inexpedient and unnecessary in the other: or, as if the saying private prayers in Latin, was never heard of, practised, or encouraged in their Church.

Again, Would we understand to what purposes the divine offices do serve; and whether the edification, instruction and consolation of the people be not some of those ends.‡ Bel-
larmino answers,

1. "That the principal end of divine offices is not the instruction or consolation of the people, but a worship due to God from the Church." As if there were no regard to be had to the special ends of those offices, such as the instruction and consolation of the people: or as if God could be honoured by that worship, where those ends are not regarded.

2. The Rhemists§ add, "That prayers are not made to teach, make learned, or increase knowledge, though by occasion they sometimes instruct; but their especial use is to offer our hearts, desires and wants to God," &c. As if there were no offices in God's worship appointed for instruction and increase

* P. Sanctæ Not. in Epist. P. Molinæi, c. 17. n. 6.

† T. G. First Reply to Dr. Stillingfleet, Sect. 3.

‡ De verbo. l. 2. c. 16. Sect. Obj. quart. [vol. 1. p. 70. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

§ Annot. 1 Cor. 14. p. 463. [fol. 296. p. 2. Lond. 1589.]

of knowledge ; and which are performed in an unknown tongue amongst them, as well as prayer. Or as if their adversaries did either deny it to be the special use of prayer, to offer our hearts, &c. to God : or did affirm that the special use of it is,* to teach, make learned, and increase knowledge ; as they with others do falsely suggest, and would fain have believed.

But to set this in a better light ; and that we may understand what are the ends and uses for which divine worship was appointed, and after what manner they are to be respected ; it is to be observed :

1. That divine worship in its first notion respects God as its object : and so the end of it in general, is the giving honour to him by suitable thoughts, words and actions.

2. That he hath appointed several ways and offices by which he will be so honoured ; and in which, as the honour doth terminate in him, so there redounds from thence benefit to the Church.

3. That the benefits redound to the Church according to the nature of those offices, and the special ends they were designed unto ; as the word of God is for our instruction and comfort, &c. The Lord's Supper for the increase of faith in God, and love to him through Jesus Christ. The praising of God is to raise our affections, and to make us more sensible of his goodness, and to quicken us in our duty. "The especial use of prayer" (that I may use the words forecited)† "is to offer up our hearts, wants and desires to God ; and by conversing with him, we may be the more ardently excited to the love and adoration of him," as the Trent Catechism‡ doth express it.

4. That those offices are to be performed so as may effectually answer those ends, and as we may receive the benefits they were appointed for : from whence it follows,

5. That if the offices of divine worship are to be performed by words, those words and that tongue (in which they are administered) must be such as will not obstruct, but promote, and in their nature are qualified to attain those ends. And if those ends cannot be attained without the tongue, in which the

* Censur. proposit. Erasmi, prop. 5. Poncet. Discour. de l'Advis. chap. 1.

† Rhem. Annotat. [Ibid.]

‡ Part. 4. c. 2. Sect. 7, 8. [p. 396, 397. Lips. 1843.]

service is performed, be understood : it makes that means as necessary in its kind, as the end ; and it is as necessary that the tongue used for those ends in divine worship be understood, as that those ends should be respected, or that there should be a tongue used at all. For it is not God, but man that is immediately respected in the words (since there is no more need of words to God, than of words that are vulgarly understood), and so it is not for him, but man, that this tongue or that, or indeed that any tongue at all is used. And if it be requisite that there be a tongue and words used in public worship, and which all persons present are supposed to join in, and receive benefit by ; then it is as necessary for the same reason, to use words significant and understood, as to use any words at all. For, saith St. Austin,* “ What doth the soundness of speech profit, if not followed with the understanding of the hearer ? Seeing there is no reason at all for our speaking, if what we speak is not understood by them, for whom, that they might understand, we spoke at all.”

From what hath been said, we may be able to vindicate such arguments of the Protestants for divine service in a known and vulgar tongue, as were taken from the ends of worship, against the replies made to them by their adversaries of the Romish Church. As,

1. The Protestants argue in general, that the end of divine offices is for the edification, instruction, and consolation of the people ; but these ends cannot be attained in a tongue not understood by them.

To this it is replied, “ That† the proposition is false, because the chief end of divine offices is not the instruction or consolation of the people, but a worship or honour due to God.”

An answer that became not so great a man. For,

1. He argues as if those ends were opposed, which are not only consistent, as principal and subordinate, but also inseparable in the case ; such are the honour of God, and the edification of the Church.

(2.) The answer is not to the purpose, unless it could be proved, that either the edification of the people is no end of the divine offices ; or that the worship is complete, though that end be not respected or attained in them. But if it be an end, and the service defective without that end be pursued ; then it

* De Doctr. Christ. l. 4. c. 16. [c. 10. vol. 3. par. 1. p. 73. Par. 1680.]

† Bellarm. de Verbo, l. 2. c. 16. Sect. Obj. 4. [ut supra.]

is not, that this is a subordinate end, and the other a principal, that will destroy the force of the argument, and justify the use of an unknown tongue, when persons are not edified by it.

2. The Protestants argue in particular, that there can no profit proceed to the Church from prayers not understood.

To this it is answered,* “That it is false, because the prayer of the Church is not made to the people, but to God for the people. And so there is no need that the people understand, and it is sufficient if God understands.”

But (1.) If this argument hold, it will prove that which they do decline, and be a reason as well for private as public prayers in an unknown tongue. For private prayer is also made to God, and by this way of reasoning it will follow, that it is sufficient that God understands it, though it is not understood by him that useth it.

(2.) Grant we to them what is not to be denied, that prayer is not made to the people, but to God for the people: yet grant they must and do to us that, “it is the offering up our hearts, wants and desires to God,† and is to excite us to the love and adoration of him.”

But if we cannot offer up our hearts, wants and desires to God, nor be excited to the love and adoration of him, by what we do not understand; then it is as necessary for us to understand, as it is to have those qualifications when we pray. For both are supposed; for that we pray, respects God; but that we speak in public prayer, respects the Church. And though the principal end, as they call it, be regarded, and it be an honour and worship given to God; yet if the less principal be neglected, and the service is not ordered to the increase of faith, love and devotion in those that offer it (as it cannot be where the words, and so the things prayed for in those words, are not understood), it makes the honour, said to be given to God, next to none: and it is much at one, whether there was no end at all propounded in worship, or such an end, as through a defect in it shall render the service no better in itself, and no more acceptable to God, than if there were none. But of this more anon.

II. I shall consider whether these ends for which divine service is appointed, can be attained, when it is performed in a tongue that is not understood.

* Bellarm. *ibid.* Sect. Obj. 2. [p. 68. col. 2.] Ledesma, c. 13. n. 11.

† Ut *supra*.

The Apostle saith, that the offices of divine worship are intended and should be ordered for the edification of the Church, 1 Cor. xiv. 4, 5. That is, say the Rhemists,* (explaining that phrase) "For increase of faith, true knowledge and a good life." But when this comes to be applied to the case of divine service administered in an unknown tongue, they set aside the increase of knowledge and instruction, as if it were not concerned in it. So doth Bellarmine,† who saith, "Though the minds of common people be not instructed by service in an unknown tongue, yet their affections are not without the benefit of it."

If this argument signifies anything, it must be either because divine service is not a means appointed for our instruction, and then he must thwart not only the Apostle (who saith it is for edification, and consequently for instruction, a branch of it), but also their own Church, in the Council of Trent,‡ which saith, "that the mass doth contain great instruction for the faithful." Or else he must say, that the means of instruction may be rendered ineffectual at the pleasure of the Church (as it is granted it is by being in an unknown tongue), and yet neither the Church be blamed, nor the institution of such means for such an end be disparaged, nor the souls of men receive any damage by the want of that instruction, and the means appointed for it. So that as far as instruction is an end, and the divine service is a means for that end, it is granted that the keeping it in an unknown tongue doth defeat that end: for he saith, "that the minds of common people are not instructed by service in an unknown tongue." And now what an usurpation is this upon God, to withhold that means that he has appointed, or to defeat the means of that end that he has appointed for it? What an injury to the souls of men? And how much accessory must that Church be to the miscarriage and damnation of such as perish for want of that knowledge and instruction the service and offices of the Church do contain, and they might receive from it?

But suppose that end be lost, "and the people's minds be not instructed, yet their affections are not without the benefit of it." This is spoken with a caution and reservation becoming one that saw farther into the consequences of what he said, than he

* Pag. 461. [ut supra, fol. 293. p. 1.]

† De Verbo. l. 2. c. 16. Obj. 2. [ut supra, p. 69. col. 2.]

‡ Sess. 22. c. 8. [ut supra, p. 854.]

cared to own. He saith at large, "their affections are not without the benefit of it:" but how the affections could be benefited, without the mind is instructed; or what the benefit is which the affections are not without, he is sparing to tell us. But however, the Rhemists advance a little farther,* for they with no little confidence do determine, "It is plain that such as pray in Latin, though they understand not what they say, do pray with as little tediousness, with as great affection and devotion, and oftentimes more than others, that pray in a tongue they understand." The Cardinal told us, "that the affections are not without benefit, though the mind be not instructed:" but now it is to a demonstration plain (in these men's account) that not only the benefit is as great, as if people do understand, but oftentimes greater than if they did understand. So that what more self-evident, than that ignorance is the mother of devotion? But yet as plain as it is, the saying is so downright a contradiction to the common sense of mankind, that I think a man may venture as roundly to assert, that it is plain a man may see without light, as that he may pray with affection and devotion, though he do not understand, and with as great as if he did: and he may with as good a grace maintain, that the best way to see, is to put out the light, as affirm with them, that such as pray in Latin, though they do not understand, oftentimes pray with more affection and devotion than they that do understand.

But because this is asserted with so much confidence, and that,† to say that people are not profited without they understand, is condemned not only as an erroneous, but wicked assertion, I shall look back, and (leaving the extravagancy of the latter as self-exposed) consider whether the affections are not without benefit, and that the soul can be devout and affected, where the understanding is not instructed, nor the mind is concerned in the service we are conversant in? The resolution of which depends upon the consideration of the soul of man, and the several faculties of it.

Concerning which it shall suffice to observe:

1. That in all reasonable and deliberate acts, there is more or less, so necessary a concurrence of the prime faculties of the soul, *viz.* the understanding, will, and affections, that none of them can be said to be excluded.

* Annotat. in 1 Cor. 14. p. 462. [ut supra, fol. 296. p. 1.]

† Ledesma. c. 13. n. 13. Censura proposit. Erasmi, prop. 5.

2. That in all such acts, if the understanding be not the leading faculty, and of such influence, that the others cannot act without it, (which must be supposed, for how can a person affect or choose what he doth not know?) Yet without that, the acts cannot be termed reasonable. So Cassiodore,* “No-body doth any thing wisely which he doth not understand.”

3. That in the acts of religion, the presence of the understanding is as much required, as in any other rational acts whatsoever; the renewing of the mind being there the spring of all spiritual action; and the whole called from thence a reasonable service.† And therefore if in any other cases the affections cannot move or be profited without the help of the understanding, then as little can it be supposed in religion, and the offices belonging to it, where the understanding is *Sonus Cordis* (as St. Austin calls it, applying it to our purpose), the note of the heart.

Now to say, “That the affections are not without profit, though the mind be not instructed; and that they that do not understand, do pray with as little tediousness, and as great affection and devotion as they that do understand” (not to repeat the rest of the stuff before cited), is to say, that the affections have no dependence in nature upon the understanding; or that religion requires less of us than any other reasonable acts whatsoever; and that what we cannot do without being lunatics or idiots in other matters, we may there creditably do, and speak and act as absurdly as we will, with allowance.

But this kind of doctrine is only to serve a turn, being fitted to those that are fitted for it, and to whom nothing can be absurd, which some men say: for there are those amongst them that cannot digest it; and do determine otherwise. So Salmeron the Jesuit,‡ “If any one prays privately, and the things prayed for are not understood by him, he wastes his time; so he that speaketh publicly in an unknown tongue, which others do not understand, he doth yield no fruit;” and then certainly others receive none. This the Council of Trent doth acknowledge, when it declares, as above said, “It seems not expedient to the Fathers, that the mass be celebrated in the vulgar tongue;” and presently adds, “lest the sheep of Christ should hunger, and when the little ones ask bread, there is none to break to them; the holy synod commands all that

* In Psal. xlvii.

† Rom. xii. 1, 2.

‡ In 1 Cor. xiv.

have the care of souls, frequently, &c. to expound somewhat of it." So that they grant, without such explication, the faithful may hunger and be without profit; for what need would there be of exposition, if the people may be as devout without it as with it? I shall conclude this with that of St. Austin,* "We ought to understand, that we may sing with human reason, not as it were with the voice of birds. For both parrots, and crows, and pies, and the like, are often taught by men to pronounce what they do not know——But to sing with understanding is granted by the Divine will to mankind." So that, according to him, if we set aside the understanding, the parrot of the Cardinal Ascanius,† had it been taught the Lord's Prayer, or other forms of devotion, as well as the Creed, might have contended in competition with those that hear, and sing, and pray, with words without understanding. Since whatever affection and devotion is pretended to without knowledge, is like "a vision of a man's own heart,"‡ and not of divine illumination, that doth either proceed from imagination or imposture.

But that we may not think this assertion of theirs ("that there may be profit without understanding, and devotion without knowledge,") to be unreasonable, they both produce experience, and endeavour also to give a rational account of it. The former is appealed to by the Rhemists:§ "As for edification, that is, for increase of faith, true knowledge, and a good life, the experience of a few years hath given all the world a full demonstration, whether our forefathers were not, &c. as devout, as we are in all our tongues, translations, and English prayers."

And we are told,|| "That the people know what is done in the general, to wit, that God is worshipped and honoured; that the priests pray to him; that good things are asked of him for the people; and thanks given to him, that the memory of Christ and his passion are celebrated, and the sacrifice offered to God. This no clown is ignorant of; and this is enough."

This is somewhat like the course taken by Socrates, that said, "He only prayed in general, because what particular

* Exposit. in Psal. xviii. [vol. 4. p. 81. Par. 1681.]

† Rhodiginus, l. 3. c. 32.

‡ Jer. xxiii. 16.

§ Pag. 461. [Ibid. fol. 293 p. 1.] Hosius, p. 9. [Collect. Gr. Anth. Par. 1661.]

|| Ledesma, c. 21. n. 23.

things were good for him, the gods knew better than himself." But whether this be done among them, with as much reason: and whether with any respect to our religion, and the several offices of it, is now to be considered.

For our satisfaction herein, we may observe:

I. They grant, that the people can and do understand no more by their service, than the general intent and points of it.

II. That the people cannot apply these generals to the particular points of it. So the Rhemists:* "The simple people are not bound to know to what petition their part pertaineth, &c. It is enough that the people can tell this holy oraison (the Pater-noster) to be appointed to call upon God," &c.

III. That no more is necessary; and though they are to ask special things of God, yet it is not needful to understand what, or how, or when, or if at all they are specially prayed for. For then they would understand the specials.

But now this state of the case will not solve the point. For,

I. This is contrary to the Apostle, who doth maintain, that as the public service of God is to be ordered so, as to be for the edification of the Church;† so the Church cannot be edified, without the offices are administered in a tongue that shall as distinctly and particularly signify and point to the thing thereby to be expressed, as a trumpet or the like instrument doth give notice by a distinction of sounds, when to advance or retreat, when to fight, and when to forbear. And that every person, the unlearned as well as the learned, may know how to apply his Amen thereunto; but which he can no more do without understanding the tongue, than he can know what motion or posture he is to observe, that hath the trumpet sounding to him without any distinction, and whose sounds and notes being confounded, give no direction to those that are to be guided by it. So Aquinas,† "How shall he say Amen, when he knows not what is prayed for; because he cannot understand, *Quid boni dicas, nisi quod benedicas*; what good thou sayest, except that thou dost bless?"

II. The nature of the thing is against it. For as the offices are various, and distinguished by their ends and uses; and we cannot attain those ends, nor make use of those offices, without the understanding of those ends and uses: so there

* Pag. 463. [Ibid. fol. 296. p. 2.]

† 1 Cor. xiv. 7, 8, 9, 16.

‡ In 1 Cor. xiv.

are particular things respected in those offices, which unless we also respect, we lose the benefit of them; but that we cannot do without a particular knowledge of them. As for example; the Romish Catechism saith,* “That prayer is the interpreter of the soul, and is directed to God or the saints. That therein men do confess their sins, and pray for the pardon of them; that they beg for others and themselves things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; that therein also they give thanks for whatsoever good they have received and do enjoy.” Now as these things are of different kinds, so according to their kind, they require different dispositions, and so what are suitable to the one, will not be suitable to the other. But if the knowledge be only general, that cannot produce special dispositions; and he that ventures to be particular therein, may rejoice and give thanks when he is to mourn and confess; may mind earthly things, when the prayer is for heavenly; may imprecate when he should bless; and instead of *Ora pro nobis*, may say, *Miserere nobis*,† that is, make a saint to be God, and apply that to the officer of the court of heaven, which he should address only to the judge. He may be all the while in a posture of contradiction to the Church, and have his dispositions so little suited to the solemnities of it, that the priests may say to such, with some variation, in the words of the Gospel, “We have piped unto you, and ye have mourned: we have mourned unto you, and ye have danced.” So that unless they will say, there is no need of particular dispositions, according to the kinds and special uses of the offices of religion, they must say, that service in an unknown tongue is not for the edification of the Church. So Aquinas again, “He who doth hear and not understand, is not edified as far as he understands not, although he understand it in general.”

III. If this were true, that a confused general knowledge is sufficient, yet this will not help them, or justify them in the use of an unknown tongue; for even the general knowledge they pretend to, doth not proceed from the tongue (for that they understand not), but is obtained some other way, that is, by some actions and postures, some particular words and phrases, some ceremonies and signals given in the administration of their service: and which would signify as much for the

* Part 4. c. 1. [p. 393. Lips. 1843.] Sect. 3. c. 2. [Ibid. p. 395.]
Sect. 2, 4, 10. c. 4. Sect. 3, 7. c. 6. [Ibid.] Sect. 2. de Orat. Domin.

† Catechis. c. 6. Sect. 3. [Ibid. p. 406.]

most part without the tongue and words, as with the tongue that is not understood.

IV. I shall add, that whereas they pretend experience in the case, and which for the present we shall not so far question, as utterly to deny, but that there may be, and is some devotion amongst the ignorant sort of them; yet so far as this devotion of theirs is real, it must be because of somewhat understood; but so far as it is without instruction, so far unquestionably it proceeds only from the imagination: and if it rises from no better or higher cause, whatsoever semblance it may have of devotion, yet it hath no right to that character. I shall make this clear by an instance or two. Not many years since, in a certain city of Brabant, there was for ornament a large statue erected at a conduit near the market-place, to which the country people as they passed to and fro, did often pay their devotions (not discerning any difference betwixt that and an image of a saint), so much to the public scandal, that, to prevent any such mistake for the future, it was by command transformed into a little boy, with a change also of the posture. Now if we would inquire into this devotion, it is much the same with what we are discoursing of. There wanted not an inward disposition, that inclined the people to it; there wanted not outward expressions, for they bowed before it, kissed the feet of it, said their paternosters, &c. before it, and all with as much devotion, as if it had been the image of St. Roch, or St. Sebastian, or St. Michael himself (the protector and patron of the place). And yet all this being applied to a common, and not a religious object, and being only the fruit of imagination, and not of instruction, it deserved another name than devotion, and was not so accounted by themselves. And now, why what is given, suppose to a right object, but without knowledge, should not be equivalent to the other, that was intended to a right, but was addressed, by mistake, to a wrong, is not easy to discern. Furthermore, let us suppose a case: a person being beforehand possessed with a report of certain persons met together upon a design of conjuration, comes to the place, and finds the company there assembled; and hearing all that they say, performed in a language he understands not, he presently is seized with a panic fear, and is every moment in expectation of the foul fiend's appearance at their summons, but is all this while abused, and under a mistake, for the persons were there met for religious worship, and so the ground of his fear imaginary. On the other hand, a person comes into a place, where he finds

several met together for conjuration, who using much the like postures as if they were at their devotions, and also words he understands not, but what for ought he knows, are the same that are used in the Church service, he falls upon his knees, pulls out his beads, says an *Ave Maria*, or *Paternoster*, or what he has been used to in that kind. And now can there be any reason after all to conclude, that this man's devotion arose from any other cause than the other's fear, and that both did not proceed from the imagination? And can there be any reason to think, that what proceeds from such a cause, is fit to be sainted, and be entitled to the name of true piety and devotion? So that to talk of devotion without instruction, or instruction sufficient to create it, is to talk against the sense of mankind; in which there may be, for ought I see, as much of mystery, but no more sense than in the wonted saying of Anthony of Padua,* produced by Bellarmine on this occasion, "That is a perfect prayer, in which the mind is so swallowed up into God, that it doth not understand its own words." In this they agree, that in both cases the words and the understanding are separated, but in this they differ, that his understanding was (as it seems) beyond the words; but in our case, the words are beyond the understanding. In both there is no need of words, and where they are used, they cannot be the means of devotion: which is no more to be found without the understanding, than the understanding can be, can attend, or be moved by words that it hath no knowledge of.

So that let them either take away the words altogether, and use no tongue in their service, and turn all into mummary and pageantry: or else let them use such words as will stir up religious affections in the faithful,† and answer the end for which they are used in public (as they confess). For though we should be of the same mind with Bellarmine,‡ "that instruction is not in the words, but in the sense;" yet how a man can understand the words contained in the sense, is as hard to understand, as how he can be religious and devout without understanding, and for we know not what.

But to proceed to another question.

III. Let us consider, "whether the worship so performed, as to leave those ends unattainable, will be accepted by God?"

* De Verbo, l. 2. c. 16. Sect. Obj. 2. præterea. [ut supra, p. 69. col. 2.]

† Catechis. Trid. p. 4. c. 8. [p. 411. Lips. 1843.] Sect. 3.

‡ De Verbo, l. 2. c. 16. Sect. Object. 4. [Ibid. p. 70. col. 1.]

Divine worship respects God as its object, and so the end of it is the giving honour to him by suitable thoughts, words and actions, as has been before observed ; but how that honour is to be given, as the nature of the thing, and divine institutions are the rule ; so when that honour is given to him, the ends, for which the worship itself is appointed, and the offices of it do serve, must determine. And if these ends are not respected, nor can be attained in the way of its ministration, we may be confident, that as the worship is not then worthy of God, so it is not accepted by him. Now,

As it has been already shewed what those ends are, so it has been proved, that those ends are not to be attained, where the service is not in a tongue known to the people, and so consequently will not be accepted by God. And for this we have the judgment of the Romish Church, when they discourse practically upon this argument, and without respect to the controversy before us. Of this I shall give an instance in prayer, (a point most of all insisted upon) of which it is said in general in the Romish Catechism,* “that it is of special concernment after what manner we pray ; for although prayer be a saving good, yet unless it be rightly performed, it doth not profit.” And elsewhere† they insist upon several things that render our prayers ineffectual, as the ignorance of what we pray for ; and the want of attention or assent to what we pray, &c. And certainly if the prayer without these ends be not acceptable to God, then such a ministration of it, as renders those ends unattainable, cannot be lawful to us, or be thought approved by him.

But how well and truly soever they speak in a case remote from controversy, yet when they come to controvert the point in hand, they do in effect unsay all that they have said ; and then the prayers used in the Church, though not at all understood by the people, are magnified for their use and benefit to man, and for their acceptance with God.

Thus the Rhemists,‡ “we doubt not but it is acceptable to God, and available to all necessities, and more agreeable to the use of all Christian people, to pray in Latin than in the vulgar, though every one in particular understandeth not what he

* Part 4. c. 8. Sect. 1. [p. 410. Lips. 1843.]

† Ibid. 2. Sect. 4. [Ibid. p. 395.]

‡ Annot. in 1 Cor. 14. p. 462. [Ibid. fol. 296. col. 1.] Et Annot. in Matth. 21. 16. [Ibid. p. 42. col. 1.]

saith.” And saith Cardinal Hosius,* “When done to give honour to God, it is acceptable to him, and no understanding of words can be compared to it.”

To say, “that our prayers are hindered of their virtue through ignorance, or want of attention,” &c. And that “they be acceptable to God, though we understand not what we say,” are things irreconcilable. But setting aside the contradiction in it, they are not without some pretences to prove, that the efficacy of the divine offices doth not depend upon the people’s understanding them. Now I might ease myself of these kind of pleas, because they suppose that which has been already disproved, *viz.* that the affections can be benefited without the understanding. But yet because they are frequently produced to prove as well the no necessity of service in a vulgar tongue, and the lawfulness of having it in an unknown tongue, as that a service of that kind is acceptable to God, and efficacious to the people, I shall, before I conclude this head (to which they more peculiarly belong), take them into consideration.

Now their arguments are taken partly from Scripture, and partly from some cases supposed to be parallel to this.

Object. 1. They say,† “that the children in the temple, as well as the people, cried Hosanna to the Son of David,” Matth. xxi. 16. “whereas they understood not what they said: and yet this was our Saviour pleased with, and defended them in it.”

But this is said with very little reason: for,

Answ. 1. It is more probable that they did understand, than that they did not; Hosanna being a form of solemn acclamation, and as easy to be understood by them in the signification, so also in the application of it to Christ upon this occasion, which, saith St. John, xii. 17, 18, was, “because the people had heard that he raised Lazarus.” And whereas our Saviour applies that of babes and sucklings to the case, that was not because these that cried Hosanna were such, but that because God never wanted instruments of his glory, but could make use of such as were mean and unfit in themselves for it.

2. Supposing they did not understand, where is the consequence, that because “young children’s prayers proceeding from the instinct of God’s Spirit be acceptable to God,” there-

* De Lingua Vernac. [ut supra] p. 9.

† Ledesma, c. 13. n. 1.

fore “the voices of other simple folk, now in the Church, though they themselves understand not what they say, be marvellous grateful to God,” as the Rhemists say.* As if an extraordinary case should be a rule for us in an ordinary ; and that prayers “proceeding from children, by the instinct of God’s Spirit,” and who were little less miraculously empowered to do it, than the ass of Balaam (if they were “sucklings, and such as could scarcely speak,” as Ledesma would have it), should teach us to choose what we do not understand. Or as if what was grateful to God from children, who were in no capacity of doing better than following others, though they did not understand, should excuse, nay, recommend the service of those that are in a capacity of understanding, and yet understand no more of what they offer to Almighty God in particular, than if they were babes and sucklings, and such as had no understanding.

The Apostle, in 1 Cor. xiv. 20, doth upon this occasion exhort, “Be not children in understanding,” so as to think God pleased with that which doth not benefit us ; or so as to think, that He who is so merciful as to “accept according to what a man hath,” should also be so remiss as to accept him that bringeth not what he hath. That when God hath given us a tongue and understanding, we should be debarred of the use of both in his worship and service, and yet our service and ourselves be as well accepted as if both were employed therein. Certainly, what will avail where there is no capacity, will not avail where there is a capacity ; and therefore it is a mean way of arguing, and will receive the same answer, “That they that have no use of reason, are truly and efficaciously baptized, and so there is no need of understanding ;”† and it would have confuted itself, if they had added, as they should, Therefore those that have understanding, may as lawfully act, and shall be as certainly accepted, though they use not that understanding as if they did.

Object. 2. “Among the Jews,‡ the prayers of the priest when he entered into the holy of holies, were accepted, though the people were without, Levit. xvi. 17, and Luke i. 9, 10. Therefore the service of the Church may be so said as all the people understand it not, and also be accepted.”

* Annot. in Matth. xxi. 16.

† Bellarm. l. 2. de Effectu Sacram. c. 32. Rhem. Annot. p. 461.

‡ Ledesma, c. 13. n. 7. Touchstone of the Reformed Gospel, c. 52.

Answ. 1. It is acknowledged on both sides, that the high priest's entering into the holy of holies was typical of Christ, and the atonement made by him, and consequently what the people could not bear a part in. But since the people are concerned with the priest in the offices of our religion, and are to set their Amen to it, there is no parity betwixt the case then and the case now.

2. How is this a proof that they had their service in an unknown tongue? Or if they were to have it in a known tongue, how can they infer, that the high priest might have used an unknown tongue when praying with the people, and that this should have been as acceptable to God, and as beneficial to them as if it had been understood?

Object 3. But they say* it proves thus much, that prayers, though made for them that do not hear, or are absent, are effectual; and then why not as well for them that do not understand them, though present?

This is an argument they must insist upon. But,

1. If this were of any force, then we need no more to pray for ourselves, because others pray for us, than we are not bound to understand what we pray, because those that pray for us do understand.

2. The dispute is not, whether persons in some cases may not be benefited by the prayers of others, though they do not understand them, as when the Church prays for the absent as well as the present, and Christ in heaven intercedes with success for his Church here, and those that are present pray for children, lunatics, and delirious: but whether such prayers are acceptable to God, which a person himself is obliged to join in, and yet so little understands, that he knows not what he prays for, whether for himself or others, nor can be certain whether indeed he prays at all. Monica prayed for her son Austin with that fervour and devotion, with such passion and continuance, that St. Ambrose told her, it was impossible that a son of such prayers and tears should miscarry: but if she had prayed in a language she understood not, she would not have known what she prayed for, and she would then have found no tears for her prayers; or if she had had prayers and tears, they had both been lost with her son. And† although the priest be a

* Ledesma, *ibid.* Bellarm. de Verb. l. 2. c. 16. Sect. Obj. 2. [vol. 1. p. 69. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

† Ledesma, c. 13. n. 13. Bellarm. *ibid.*

public person, and offers up our prayers to God, yet this doth not at all exclude the faithful from a share in them : and therefore, as the priest is the mouth of the congregation, and as such he must use a tongue the congregation understands : so the congregation is to attend to him, and to give their Amen and assent to what he in their name offers to God : and he is neither priest nor mouth to them, if he prevents them in their part, and renders them incapable of bearing a part in it, by using a tongue they understand not. And therefore it is as necessary the congregation should understand as the priest ; and if he do otherwise, he can no more justify himself, than if he did celebrate the service in a tongue he himself knew nothing of, and which neither the one nor the other did understand. So that upon the whole, we have reason to conclude with Sanders,* “ That an unknown tongue is not profitable for the people ;” though he will not allow it for that reason to be unlawful.

And that is the thing I shall now particularly inquire into, by considering :

IV. Whether from the Apostle’s discourse upon this argument, it can be reasonably concluded, that divine service so administered, as not to be understood of the people, is unlawful ?

In the Apostle’s discourse upon this argument, 1 Cor. xiv. there are two things agreed in betwixt the contending parties.

I. That the service of God is so to be ordered, as may be for the edification of the Church, verse 4, 5, 12. And that what is inconsistent with the general, much more the universal edification of it, is not to be allowed.

II. That an unknown tongue in such assemblies and offices as the Apostle speaks of, is inconsistent with, and cannot be for the public edification, ver. 2, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16.

But though it be thus far agreed, yet they afterwards divide upon it from the Protestants.

For,

1. Some of the Church of Rome do say, that it is evident from this place of Scripture, that a vulgar and known tongue was not used in those days in public worship.

2. That if so be such was then used, yet the Apostle doth not forbid the use of an unknown tongue in it.

The first do wholly found what they have to say upon

* Orat. de Ling. Offic. Eccles.

verse 16 : “How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned [or idiot] say Amen at thy giving of thanks ?”

“This shews,”* say they, “that such giving of thanks was not accustomed to be made in the vulgar tongue ; for had the service been in the vulgar, there needed no man to have supplied the place of the idiot.”

This at first sight may seem a pretty argument to one that understands no more than Latin and English ; but the mischief of it is, that it is not true. Of this mind is Bellarmine, &c. who saith,

1. “That the Greek phrase *ὁ ἀναπληρῶν τὸν τόπον*,† according to the use of that tongue, doth not signify one that is in the stead of an idiot, or unlearned, but thereby are meant all rude unlearned men.” So Chrysostom and Theophylact expound it, &c.

2. “There was no such custom in the Apostolical times, and long after, of one to answer in the place of the vulgar ; but that the people were wont to answer, as is evident from Justin Martyr,” &c.

After this argument has been so clearly relinquished, it might have been omitted by us, had it not been re-assumed with no little assurance and triumph by others‡ since Bellarmine’s time.

II. Those among them that do quit this, yet hold that the Apostle doth not forbid a tongue so known, as the Latin is now, in divine worship. And for this they offer several arguments, which will be all comprehended, and I conceive, cleared, by considering,

1. What is meant by the unknown tongue which the Apostle condemns ?

2. What by the assemblies in which such an unknown tongue is forbid ?

3. What by the service used in those assemblies ?

4. How far the Apostle’s prohibition is to be extended ?

Quest. 1. As to the first,

They say,§ that the tongues condemned were miraculous and extraordinarily infused, but what they plead for is acquired and learnt.

* Ledesma, c. 27. n. 5, &c. Sanders’ Orat. de Lingua, &c.

† De Verbo, l. 2. c. 16. Sect. alii ergo. [ut supra, p. 68. col. 1.] Rhem. Annot. p. 458. Marg.

‡ V. Petræ Sanctæ, c. 17. n. 5. Touchstone of the Reformed Gospel, c. 52. p. 138.

§ Ledesma, c. 26. Rhem. Annot. p. 461.

A. But supposing the tongues were miraculous ; yet what is this to the case in hand, when they were not condemned for being miraculous (for as such they were gifts from God and signs to men), but as they were abused, and used neither to the glory of God nor the edification of the Church. And by parity of reason, every unknown tongue, as well what is acquired, as infused, is condemned also. The miraculous tongue was forbidden, when it did not profit, when it was a speaking to the air, when he that spoke was a barbarian to him that heard, and when he that heard could not say amen to him that spoke, ver. 2, 9, 11, 16. And if a tongue acquired be as much unknown as a tongue infused, the reasons being common to both, the one is as much prohibited in those circumstances as the other.

Nay, according to their way of arguing, it will follow, that if tongues miraculously infused, which were a “sign to them that believed not,” might not be used in the cases abovesaid, then much less may such as are acquired by education and other human ways.

But they say further, “That the Apostle speaks of a tongue which no one understands in the whole Church, but not of that which is understood by some, at least by him that officiates.”*

But for this they offer no manner of poof, neither is there any. For, (1.) the Apostle speaks of such a tongue as is not for the edification of the Church ; but if some only understand it, those that do not understand, are no more edified by the understanding of the rest than if none understood it. (2.) There are two sorts of persons concerned, one that can say Amen, and another that cannot, whom the Apostle calls unlearned. But the unlearned are as well, as he saith, to be respected as the learned ; and the unlearned being ordinarily more than the learned, it must consequently be such a tongue which all, or the most, did understand that he pleads for ; and such a tongue which none or the fewest did understand that he pleads against.

Lastly, They say,† “The Apostle condemns a barbarous tongue, but not that which is understood by learned and civil people in every great city, as Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.” So the Rhemists.

* Bellarm. *ibid.* Sect. vera igitur. Sect. at objicies. [col. 2.] Sect. in posteriore. S. C. p. 176. [Ibid. p. 69. col. 2.]

† Annot. p. 461.

And we are further told,* “That all tongues are barbarous except those three.”

But all this is spoken very precariously. For the Apostle excepts no tongue, as a tongue, from being barbarous. For that is barbarous with him that is not understood, whether it be Hebrew or Arabic, Greek or Scythian, Latin or Dalmatic. In this sense Ovid took it, speaking of himself in exile, amongst the Getæ,

Barbarus hic Ego sum, quia non intelligor ulli :

I am here a Barbarian, because I am not understood by any.

And in this sense it is here taken by ancient expositors. Thus St. Jerome,† “every speech which is not understood is barbarous.” Thus St. Chrysostom,‡ and indeed several also amongst themselves.

So that upon the whole it is manifest, that the Apostle means by an unknown tongue, that which is not understood of the people.

Quest. 2. What are the assemblies in which the Apostles condemn the use of an unknown tongue?

The champions§ of this cause, in the Church of Rome, do allege that much of the chapter refers to spiritual conferences and collocutory exercises then used in lesser assemblies, which they endeavour to prove more especially from the directions given by the Apostle, ver. 27, &c.

If we should grant that part of the Apostle's discourse refers to such conferences, yet what is this to that part of it that treats of public worship? Or indeed, what is it to the purpose at all, when there were mostly the same offices used in one as the other, and the same end prescribed to the use of them in both? Those that do thus distinguish, have not ventured to tell us where the Apostle doth treat of the one, and where of the other: and it is evident that he applies his argument of edification to the whole, and then proceeds from one office to another, from prophesying to praying and singing, if not also to the Lord's supper. Now where the end is common to all, without distinction, the means conducing to that end are in all alike to be observed. And if in those lesser

* Harding in Jewel, divis. 3. p. 116. Jo. Baptistæ de Rubeis Rationale, l. 2. c. 9. Sanders' Orat. &c.

† In Loc. [vol. 11. p. 939. Veron. 1742.] ‡ Salmeron. Lyra in Loc.

§ Bellarm. c. 16. init. [ut supra, p. 67.] Rhemists Annotat. p. 462. [p. 260, 261. Dublin, 1816.]

assemblies (when they expounded, prayed or sung) they were to use a tongue known to the assembly, because without so doing, the ends of their so assembling would have been defeated; then certainly it was, if not more, yet at least as necessary, that the same order be observed when the whole Church came together into one place.

Quest. 3. What was the service used in those assemblies, and that was forbidden to be celebrated in an unknown tongue?

Some of the Church of Rome* will understand it only of preaching; and those that do grant it to respect prayers, yet will have it understood of such prayers as were inspired. But what though the prayers were inspired, when they were to be uttered in a tongue known to the Church, and were not to be used if they were not for the edification of the Church; as they were not if not understood? And is not the reason as full against prayers not inspired, when they are not understood? The question is not about prayers inspired, or not inspired, but known and unknown; according to which all the offices of the Church are to be tried, as to their lawfulness and expedience.

But let the prayers be as they will, yet, say they,† “the Apostle treats of them occasionally only.”

Supposing this so to be, yet that is not to the purpose, for the question is not, whether the Apostle treats so expressly of prayer, as of prophesying; as whether the prohibition of an unknown tongue, and the argument taken from the end of divine offices, lie not as expressly against praying as prophesying in that way? And whether the words, “if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding remaineth unfruitful,” &c. ver. 14, 16, are not as plain as, “he that speaketh (or prophesieth) in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men,” &c. If the prohibition be the same, and the reason of the prohibition be the same in both; then it is not the being expressly or occasionally handled, that can make so vast a difference, as that the former shall be lawful, and the latter unlawful.

Quest. 4. How far is the Apostle’s prohibition to be extended?

This will be determined partly from what hath been before

* Bellarm. *ibid.* Sect. Vera igitur. [p. 68. col. 1.] Sect. Ad hanc igitur. [Ibid. p. 67. col. 2.] Rhemists Annot. in 1 Cor. xiv. 26. p. 460.

§ Sanders’ Orat. p. 64, 66. [Collect. Gr. Auth. Par. 1661.]

said, and partly from the current of the Apostle's discourse, who, as he lays down that general rule, "let all things be done to edifying;" so upon that principle, he prohibits the use of an unknown tongue, as inconsistent with it, ver. 14, "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding remaineth unfruitful;" where he doth not speak of a better and worse, and prefer that which is understood before that which is not (as they* would have it), but he speaks of a good and bad; and so doth absolutely condemn an unknown tongue for the unprofitableness of it. For, saith he, "my spirit prayeth," not the affection, but the spirit in the gift of an unknown tongue (as many of the ancients† and some of themselves expound it), "but my understanding remaineth unfruitful," to myself, that is, if I do not understand it; and to others, if they do not understand me, as the Apostle doth explain it, verse 16.

So that from the whole we may with good reason conclude, that the administration of divine service in an unknown tongue, is as unlawful as express Scripture can make it: and that after all their attempts to decline, pervert, and overthrow it, the fourteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians remains in full force against the opinion and practice of the Church of Rome; and is a sufficient reason on their part, to keep the Scriptures in an unknown tongue, as long as their service is, contrary to the Scripture, celebrated constantly in it.

SECT. III.

I shall inquire, Whether the celebrating divine service in a tongue not understood of the people, hath been the ancient rite of every Church?

I. I shall consider whether it hath been an ancient rite.

II. Whether from the time of its having been a rite, it hath been the rite and custom of every Church.

Both of these are affirmed by the Council of Trent.

Quest. I. Whether it hath been an ancient rite?

Ancient is a term of an uncertain date, and seems to have been chosen by the Council upon mature deliberation; lest peradventure if it had been determined, it might have been so

* Bellarm. Sect. In posteriore. [Ibid. p. 69. col. 2.] Rhemists Annot. p. 460.

† S. Chrysost. Homil. 35. [vol. 10. p. 325. Par. 1732.] Theophylact. [vol. 2. p. 209. Venet. 1754.] Salmeron in loc. Hieron. in loc. [ut supra.]

late, as to be of no authority in itself; or so early, as, for want of truth, it might have given a foul shock to its own authority. But, however, because nothing can be ancients than what is first, let us consider how service was administered in the Apostolical times, and so downwards, as much before the Council as any thing can be reasonably said to be ancient by it. I have already accounted for the Apostle's sense in this matter, which Cassander * calls (after St. Chrysostom in loc.) an Apostolical command for service in a tongue understood of the people. And if we take a step lower, and so proceed, we shall find an uncontrollable evidence for it, both as to the judgment and practice of the Church. In the first place, (setting aside the pretended Liturgies of St. James and St. Clement,† which are however plainly for it, as is acknowledged), is Justin Martyr,‡ that flourished about 150 years after Christ, who relates, "That after the bishop had concluded his prayer and giving of thanks, all the people did assent to it with an Amen." Which they could not have done, as the Apostle and Fathers affirm, unless they understood what was prayed for. To this purpose doth Clemens Alexandrinus also write, who lived towards the close of the second century.

Origen, who lived about the middle of the third century, saith,§ "The Greek Christians in their prayers used the Grecian, and the Romans used the Roman words, and each prays and praises God in his own tongue. And the Lord of all tongues doth hear those that pray to him in all tongues," &c. St. Cyprian|| at the same time doth say, "That the mind in prayer doth think of nothing else but what is prayed for. And therefore the priest before prayer doth prepare the minds of the brethren, by saying, 'Lift up your hearts,' that when the people doth answer, 'We lift them up unto the Lord,' they may be admonished, that they ought to think of nothing but the Lord. For not the sound of the voice, but the mind must pray to the Lord."

Dionysius Alexandrinus,¶ that lived in the same age, in a letter to Xystus, bishop of Rome, doth write of a person that

* De Offic. pii viri, p. 865.

† Salmeron in 1. Cor. 14. Sect. His igitur.

‡ Apolog. sub fin. [p. 82. Par. 1742.]

§ Contra Cels. l. 8. p. 402. Cantabr. [vol. 1. p. 769. Par. 1733.]

|| In Orat. Dom. n. 22. [p. 425. Venet. 1738.]

¶ Apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 7. c. 8.

having been baptized by heretics, upon the hearing the questions and answers at the baptism of the orthodox, questioned his own baptism. "But," saith he, "we would not rebaptize him, because he had for a good while held communion with us in the eucharist, and had been present at our giving of thanks, and answered, Amen."

St. Basil,* who flourished about the year 370, putting the question, "How the spirit prays, and the mind is without fruit?" Answers, "It is meant of those that pray in a tongue unknown to them that hear. For when the prayers are unknown to them that are present, the mind is without fruit to him that prays," &c.

And as to the practice of the Church in the public service, he declares,† "that the people had the Psalms, Prophets, and Evangelical commands: and when the tongue sings, the mind doth search out the sense of the things that are spoken." And he relates how the Christians‡ used to spend the night in prayers, confessions, and psalms; one beginning, and the rest following. And that the noise of those that joined in the prayers, was like that of the waves breaking against the shore.

With him we have St. Ambrose agreeing, that lived much about the same time; who saith,§ "It is evident that the mind is ignorant, where the tongue is not understood; as some Latins that are wont to sing in Greek, being delighted with the sound of the words, without understanding what they say." And again,|| "The unskilful hearing what he doth not understand, knows not the conclusion of the prayer, and doth not answer Amen, that is, 'it is true,' that the blessing may be confirmed. For by those is the confirmation of the prayer fulfilled, that do answer Amen," &c. And he doth shew what an honour is given to God,¶ what a reverence is derived upon our religion, and how far it excels the Pagan, that he that hears understands, and that nothing is in the dark.

And he saith,** "This is a symphony, when there is in the

* Tom. 2. Reg. brev. Reg. 278. [vol. 2. p. 733. Par. 1839]

† Tom. 1. in Psal. 28. [Ibid. p. 175.]

‡ Tom. 2. Epist. 63. Cler. Neocæs. [Ibid. vol. 3. p. 450.] Tom. 1. Hexameri. Hom. 4. sub fin. [Ibid. vol. 1. p. 55.]

§ In 1 Cor. 14. v. Nam si oravero. [vol. 2. Append. p. 157. Par. 1690.]

|| Ibid. Qui supplet locum.

¶ Ibid. [p. 158.] Si a. omnes prophetant.

** Tom. 3. Comm. 1. 7. in Luc. 15. p. 169. Par. 1614. [vol. 1. p. 1468. Par. 1687.]

Church a concord of divers ages and virtues ; that the psalm is answered, and Amen said," &c.

Towards the latter end of the same century lived St. Chrysostom, who saith,* "That the people are much concerned in the prayers ; that they are common to them and the priest ; that in the sacrament, as the priest prays for the people, so the people for the priest. And that those words, 'and with thy spirit,' signify nothing else—And what wonder is it, that in the prayers the people do talk with the priest?"

And elsewhere he saith,† "That the Apostle shews that the people receive no little damage when they cannot say Amen."

To conclude, Bellarmine saith,‡ "That in the Liturgy which bears this Father's name, the parts sung by the priest, deacon, and people, are most plainly distinguished."

To him let us add St. Jerome § his contemporary, who declares, that at the funeral of Paula in Jerusalem, the multitude did attend, and sung their psalms in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Syriac, according to the nations they were of. And we are farther told, that at Bethlehem there resorted Gauls, Britons, Armenians, Indians, &c., and there were almost as many choirs of singers as of countries ; of a different tongue, but of one and the same religion.

And the same Father tells us,|| that at Rome the people sounded forth Amen like to the noise of thunder.

Let us next consult St. Augustine, of the same time,¶ who saith, "That nobody is edified by what he doth not understand." And, "that the reason why the priest lifts up his voice in the Church when he prayeth, is not that God, but the people may hear and understand and join with him." And that whereas the bishops and ministers of the Church were sometimes guilty of using barbarous and absurd words, that they should correct it, that the people may most plainly understand, and say Amen.

And elsewhere, as has been quoted before,** exhorts

* In 2 Cor. c. 8. Homil. 18. "ΗΘικον.

† In 1 Cor. 14. Hom. 35. [Ibid. p. 525.]

‡ L. 2. c. 16. Sect. idem etiam. v. Chrysost. tom. 4. Par. 1621.

§ Tom. 1. Epitap. Paulæ ad Eustochium. [vol. 1. p. 717. Veron. 1734.] Epist. Paulæ ad Marcellam. [Ibid. p. 204, 205.]

|| Tom. 10. procem. 2. ad Galat. [Ibid. vol. 7. p. 427.]

¶ Tom. 3. in Genes. 1. 12. c. 8. [vol. 3. par. 1. p. 302. Par. 1680.] Lib. de Magistro, c. 1. et 7. [Ibid. vol. 1. p. 541, 551.] De Catechis. rud. c. 9. [Ibid. vol. 6. p. 272.]

** In Psal. 18. [Ibid. vol. 4. p. 81.]

that they be not as parrots and pies, that say they know not what.

Thus far our authorities do proceed with little interruption. For Bellarmine doth grant,* “that not only in the times of the Apostles, all the people were wont to answer in divine offices, but that the same was a long time after observed both in the Eastern and Western Church, as is evident from St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome,” &c.

Now having derived the title thus far for above 400 years, we need not be much solicitous for what was introduced afterwards; but yet for a farther confirmation, I shall add some testimonies of a later date; such is that known edict of the Emperor Justinian,† who died anno 565, in which it is thus enacted, “We command all bishops and priests to celebrate the holy oblation, and the prayers in sacred baptism, not in a low, but such a voice as may be heard by the people; that their hearts may thereby be raised up with greater devotion, and honour be given to God, for so the holy Apostle teacheth in the first to the Corinthians, ‘For if thou only bless with the spirit,’” &c.

To this I shall add that of Isidore Hispalensis,‡ that lived in the end of the fifth century, who saith, “That it behoveth that when it is sung in the Church, that all do sing; and when prayers are offered, that all do pray; and when there is reading, that all do read; and silence being made, that all hear.”

This is also agreeable to the former opinion of the Church of Rome itself; and for proof of which, what can we desire more than the declarations of Popes and Councils? and this we have. For we read of a permission given by the Pope to the Moravians,§ at the instance of Cyril (who had converted them and other nations of the Slavonians) to have divine service in their own tongue; and that he and the conclave were induced to it, when not a few did oppose it, by a voice from heaven, that said, “Let every spirit praise the Lord, and every tongue confess to him,” as Æneas Silvius, afterwards Pope, relates.

* C. 16. Sect. sed neque.

† Novel. 122. See this vindicated in Bishop Jewel’s Reply to Harding’s Answer, p. 128.

‡ De Eccles. Off. l. 1. c. 10. [p. 393. Colon. Agr. 1617.]

§ Æneas Silvius Hist. Bohem. l. 1. c. 13. Anno 860.

And Pope John VIII. not long after, in anno 880,* writes thus to Sfantopulcer, a prince of the Slavonians, “We command that the praises and works of our Lord Christ be declared in the same (Slavonian) tongue. For we are admonished by sacred writ, to praise the Lord, not only in three, but in all tongues, saying, ‘Praise the Lord all ye nations, praise him all ye people.’ And the Apostles filled with the Holy Ghost, spake in all tongues. And St. Paul admonisheth, ‘let every tongue confess;’ and in the first to the Corinthians, he doth sufficiently and plainly admonish us, that in speaking we should edify the Church of God. Neither doth it hinder the faith or doctrine to have the mass sung, or the gospel and lessons well translated, read, or other divine offices sung in the same Slavonian tongue; because he who made the three principal tongues, *viz.* Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, made all to his praise,” &c

And conformable to this is the decree of the Council of Lateran under Innocent III. anno 1215:† that “because in many parts, within the same city and diocese, there are many people of different manners and rites mixed together, but of one faith, we therefore command, that the bishops of such cities or dioceses provide fit men who shall celebrate divine offices, according to the diversity of tongues and rites, and administer the sacraments.”

This may be further confirmed by the very offices of the Church of Rome;‡ but this is sufficient to shew that the Church of Rome hath departed from Scripture, antiquity, and itself, when it doth require that divine service be performed in a tongue unknown to the people: and that it was never the opinion of the Fathers, nor any Church, nor even of the Church of Rome, that it is most expedient to have it so performed.§ So little was it then thought that religious things, the less they are understood, the more they would be admired; and that to preserve a reverence for them, and the people from dangerous errors, it is requisite to keep them from being understood. So little was it pleaded, that there are any tongues sacred in themselves; and that as the three upon the cross of

* Concil. tom. 24. Epist. 247. Paris, 1644. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 9. p. 177. Lut. Par. 1672.]

† Can. 9. [Ibid. vol. 11. par. 1. p. 161.]

‡ Vid. Cassandri Liturg. c. 36.

§ Epist. Cleri Gall. Collect. p. 63. [Par. 1661.] Epist. p. Alex. 7. in Collect. p. 69. Hosius, [Ibid.] p. 64.

Christ,* are to be preferred before others, and to exclude the rest ; so the Latin, as next to the head of Christ, is the most venerable of the three. So little was it then thought that there is a certain kind of divinity in Latin, and something more of majesty, and fitter to stir up devotion than in other tongues.† So little were they afraid that Latin would be lost, if the service were not kept in it ; or however, so little evident is it, that they valued the preservation of that tongue above the edification of the Church.

Lastly, So little did they think of the expedience of having the service in one common tongue, as Latin,‡ “that Christians, wherever they travel, may find the self-same service, and priests may officiate in it as at home.” As if for the sake of the few that travel, the many that stay at home should be left destitute ; and for one man’s convenience, ten thousand be exposed to eternal perdition. These are arguments coined on purpose to defend the cause, and so are peculiar to the Church that needs them.

II. Let us consider, whether from the time of its having been a rite, it hath been the rite of every Church ?

To this I shall only produce their own confessions,§ for it is acknowledged, that the Armenians, Egyptians, Habassines, Muscovites, and Sclavonians, have their service in a tongue known to the people.|| And their giving them the hard names of heretics, schismatics, and barbarous, will not save the Council from being fallible, when it saith, “It is the rite of every Church.”

But were there no such Churches in the world that herein practised contrary to the Church of Rome, yet it would no more justify her, than it can make that good which is evil, that expedient which is mischievous to the Church of God, or reconcile one part of the Council to the other, that when it hath declared, “the mass contains great instruction for the people,” yet adds, “that it is expedient, and an approved rite, that it be not celebrated in the vulgar tongue.”

* Bellarm. Sect. septimo. [ut supra, p. 67. col. 1.] P. Sanct. c. 17. n. 3. E. W. Truth will out, p. 45, 47.

† Roterus, c. 22. Portraiture, c. 14. p. 224. Bellarm. l. 1. de Missa, c. 11. Sanders’ Orat. p. [ut supra.] 72.

‡ Rhem. Annot. p. 461.

§ Cassander Liturg. c. 11, 13, 15.

|| Ledesma, c. 33. n. 5. Bellarm. c. 16. Sect. Obj. ult. [ut supra, p. 71.] Salmeron in 1 Cor. 16. Sect. septimo.

But, say they, this is granted, if there were no interpretation ; but that is provided for by the Council, for it is ordered, "That lest Christ's sheep should hunger, all that have the care of souls shall frequently expound," &c. And that we are now to consider.

SECT. IV.

Whether the provision made by the Council of Trent for having some part of the Mass expounded, be sufficient to countervail the mischief of having the whole celebrated in a tongue not understood of the people, and to excuse the Church of Rome in the injunction of it ?

This is the last refuge they betake themselves to ;* confessing that without an interpretation St. Paul is against them, but with this, they plead, he is for them.

But what shall we then think of the case in their Church, at a time, when as the people could not understand, so the priests could not interpret, and wanted both the gift, and had not acquired so much as the art of it ? What shall we think of their case, and their Church, that hath neither provided nor doth use such an interpretation as the Apostle speaks of, but what differs as much from it in respect of the light it gives to the people, as both that and the tongue they use do in the way by which they are obtained ? If it were a translation, what a ludicrous thing would it be for a Church in its constant service to take, suppose the Lord's Prayer, in pieces, and first pronounce it in Latin and then in English ? But as they do not permit their offices, nor the Holy B. Virginis Breviary, or Mass-book,† to be translated into a vulgar tongue ; so the verbal translation of it, during the celebration of mass, was never thought of by the Council, but was thereby condemned as the cause and seed-plot of many errors ; as we are informed in a letter,‡ wrote upon the occasion of Voisin's translation, by the whole clergy of France, to Pope Alexander VII.

And whatsoever the exposition did refer to, let it be what it

* S. C. Answ. to D. Peirce, p. 175. Sanders' Orat. [Ibid.] p. 63.

† Extract. ex Regist. Facult. Par. Anno 1525. Collectio, p. 8. Censuræ, Anno 1655. p. 18. Procez contre Voisin, Anno 1660, p. 55, &c. [Collect. Grav. Auth. Par. 1661.]

‡ Epist. Cleri, Anno 1660. [Ibid.] p. 62.

will, yet it was not to the devotional part, as Sanders declares ;* who (after he had pleaded that an unknown tongue, with interpretation, was the perfect fulfilling of St. Paul's advice), perceiving a difficulty behind, throws all off with this, "If the interpretation of prayers be laid aside for a season, it is, however, not to be thought that it is to be omitted for ever," &c. So that at most, no more was intended than a short exposition of some doctrinal point or ceremony (which might as well be called an Exposition of the Breviary, or any other book, containing much the same things as the Missal). And it is probable, that so much as this also was never intended, which, if ever, is very rarely practised amongst them ; inso-much, as Ledesma saith,† that the sense of the Council was, "that the people should be instructed only by sermons;" indeed, they would rather have this go for an argument than dispute it. They do as the Irish by their bogs, run over it lightly, for fear if they tread too hard, it will not support their cause, but stifle it. And therefore they wheel off again, and then tell us,‡ "that it being a known set form, in one set language, those that are ignorant of it at first, need not continue so, but by due attention and diligence may arrive to a sufficient knowledge." As if the poor people are inexcusable if they do not arrive to a sufficient knowledge of the tongue (which must be learned, before the things) without other helps than their own attention and diligence ; when the priests and others are trained up to the knowledge and understanding of Latin by rules, masters, and frequent exercise. Surely they had the mass in Latin, when the learned themselves did not understand it, as Valla saith.§ They had the mass in Latin, when the greatest part of the people did not understand it, as Faber relates.|| They had the mass in Latin, when not only the people, but the priests and deacons, rarely understood what they prayed for, as Billet, &c. confess. And where was then their attention and diligence, that to their lives' end, either daily rehearsed it, or often heard it, and yet never understood it? And is it not so still, when, notwithstanding all the noise

* Orat. &c. [Ibid.] p. 63.

† Cap. 15. Sect. Decret. Con. Trid. n. 2.

‡ S. C. Answ. p. 176.

§ Elegant. Præf.

|| In 1 Cor. 14. Cassand. Liturg. c. 36. Sixtus Senens. Biblioth. 6. Annot. 263. [vol. 2. p. 413. Venet. 1574.]

of Exposition, Manuals, and Primers,* &c. for the use of the vulgar, yet, setting aside some little forms, and the ceremonies of it, they are so ignorant of the contents of the Missal or Mass-book, that as to the matter of it, they know it not from the Breviary; nor would know it from the Alcoran, if read in the same tongue, alike pronounced, and the same falls and postures were used in the reading of it? So that what more plain, than that the means they have provided is not sufficient for to instruct and edify the people; and that after all they do hold this instruction unnecessary, and that the people are safe without it? And this is the case; for it is generally resolved by their casuists, both for priest and people, that "they do their duty, and merit, when they say their prayers, though they do not understand;" so Eckius, so Salmeron,† &c. And, "if it were otherwise, very few would do their duty, when so very few do at all understand what they say," as Cardinal Tolet‡ doth determine. So indulgent are they, and very reasonable it is that they should be so, that when they have put out the people's eyes, they should take good care to make the way broad and smooth for them.

But in good earnest, can we think this way as safe as it is broad, and that there is no ditch into which both priest and people, if alike blind, may fall and perish? And if there be, must not the case of that people be very lamentable that are wholly left to the ability and sincerity of their priest, who, if he wants the former, may, through ignorance, turn the most solemn part of their service, as it happens, into nonsense or blasphemy; and if he wants the latter, may use a spell for prayer, and the ancient charm of *Abracadabra* for *Ave Maria*, as a learned person hath observed.§ Nay, instead of baptizing in the sacred name of the Father, &c., he may do by the person as a Jew under the profession of a priest is said to have done by a certain prince in the last age, and baptize him in the horrid name of the devil. There is, then, nothing so absurd or wicked, which, according to the case, may not be practised; and neither prayers be prayers, nor sacraments sacraments, nor persons Christians, as long as the priest doth alone know, or neither priest nor people understand.

* S. C. p. 175.

† Salmeron in 1 Cor. 14. Disp. 3.

‡ Instruct. Sacerd. [Lib. 2.] c. 13. n. 5. et 6. [p. 290. col. 1. Colon. 1621.]

§ Dr. Stillingfleet's Answer to T. G. c. 3. Sect. 3.

But supposing that there be no defect in either of these, and that the whole service is faithfully and understandingly performed; yet if the tongue in which it is performed be not understood of the people, there can be no understanding of the sense contained in it; and where the sense and matter is not understood, there cannot be, as I have shewed, those dispositions of soul, that attention of mind, that faith which gives the Amen to our prayers, &c., and which renders the service acceptable to God, and beneficial to ourselves; and consequently a service so contrived, as shall defeat those ends, is one of the greatest mischiefs that can befall a Church, and must render the Romish Church inexcusable in the injunction of it, and justify those that have reformed it.

SECT. V.

We are come to inquire, Whether, upon the whole, the service of God ought not to be celebrated in a tongue vulgarly understood?

The Church of Rome doth anathematize, and doom to hell, those that hold a vulgar tongue necessary in divine service, and doth both absolutely forbid their own Missal to be translated, and persecute those that have so used it.* And yet they cannot, dare not say it is unlawful in itself; for it is better to have it in the vulgar than not at all, saith one.† It is a matter of discipline, saith a second.‡ It hath been granted in some cases, is acknowledged by others; and it is most expedient to have it in the vulgar, saith a fourth.§ And if so, why this diligent care to prevent and suppress it? Why this outcry against it? Why this severity? What need of such decrees and anathemas of Councils? What need such commands of the popes for princes to oppose it with all their force (as that of Gregory VII. to Vratislaus of Bohemia)? What reason is there for a general convention of the clergy of a kingdom to proceed against the translation of their Missal? When, if we consult the ends for which the public service was instituted; if we consult the reason of the thing; if we consult Scripture, or Fathers, or the practice of the Church for

* Bellarm. c. 26. sub fin.

† T. G. against Dr. Stillingfleet, Sect. 8. n. 3. p. 28.

‡ Ledesma, c. 33. n. 1.

§ Cassander de Offic. pii Viri, p. 865.

about seven hundred years together, we shall find that it is not only expedient, but necessary to have it in a tongue understood of the people ; and that the Church of Rome, that is so forward in its anathema, is under a precedent, and greater one, even that of the Apostle, “Whosoever shall preach any other Gospel, let him be anathema.” So that, which is most to be respected, the anathema of Heaven, or that of the Council ; the command of God, or a decree of a Pope ; the Church of God in its best times, or the particular Church of Rome in latter ages ; whether the edification of the Church of God, or the will and interest of a corrupted Church, is not difficult to conceive. And therefore we may end as we began, with the Church of England :* “It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayers in the Church, or minister the sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people.”

* Art. 24.

END OF VOL. VI.

It is not the Church of England which is the subject of this inquiry, but the Church of Christ. The Church of Christ is the Church of the living and true God, the Church of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the Church of the redeemed, the Church of the elect, the Church of the saints. It is the Church of the living and true God, the Church of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the Church of the redeemed, the Church of the elect, the Church of the saints. It is the Church of the living and true God, the Church of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the Church of the redeemed, the Church of the elect, the Church of the saints.

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